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HOLY GHOST FATHERS
SCHOLASTICATE
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HOLY GHOST FATHERS
SCHOLASTICATE
FERNDALE, CONN.

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VOLUME V.

CONTAINING THE CONVERT AND THE FIRST PART OF THE WRITINGS IN DEFENCE OF THE CHURCH.

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CONTENTS.

The Convert—	Page.
Preface,	1
Chapter I. Childhood and Youth,	3
II. Presbyterian Experience,	11
III. Become a Universalist,	20
IV. Universalism Unsatisfactory,	29
V. Become a World-Reformer	39
VI. Methods of World-Reform,	50
VII. The Working-Men,	59
VIII. Religion of Humanity.	66
IX. Union and Progress.	74
X. My "New Views."	82
XI. Saint-Simonism,	90
XII. Horrible Doctrines,	99.
XIII. Getting Better,	109
XIV. Man no Church-Builder,	121
XV Providential Men,	132
XVI. Struggles after Light,	140
XVII. A Step Forward,	150
XVIII. Become a Catholic,	162
XIX. Belief on Authority.	175
XX. Conclusion,	185
The Princeton Review and the Convert,	200
A Letter to Protestants.	
Chapter I. Introduction,	241
II. Protestantism a Failure,	244
III. Obligation to Worship God,	270
IV. Reason Suffices not,	281
V. Nature not Sufficient for Nature,	302
VI. Revelation Insufficient,	320
The Church against No-Church,	331
The Episcopal Observer vs. The Church,	390
Faith not Possible without The Church.	417
The Church a Historical Fact,	457
Liberalism and Catholicity,	476
The Great Question,	527
Extra Ecclesiam Nulla Salus,	572

JAN 3 1983

THE CONVERT; OR, LEAVES FROM MY EXPERIENCE.

To the

RIGHT REVEREND JOHN BERNARD FITZPATRICK, D. D.,

Bishop of Boston.

This unpretending volume is most respectfully dedicated as a feeble mark of the veneration for his virtues, and the deep gratitude for his services to the convert, cherished by his Spiritual Son.

PREFACE.

THE volume here offered to the reading public is no work of fiction, and the person who gives an account of himself is no imaginary person around whom I have chosen to weave passages from my own experience. The person who tells his story is myself, and I have aimed to tell my story, so far as it bears on my religious convictions and experience, with simplicity, frankness, and truthfulness. The book, whatever else it may or may not be, is an honest book.

I have traced, with all the fidelity I am master of, my entire religious life from my earliest recollection down to my admission into the bosom of the Catholic Church. I have concealed none of my errors, disguised none of my changes, and sought to represent myself at no period as better or worse than I was. My aim has been, neither to vindicate nor to condemn myself, but simply to tell the truth.

Though I am the hero of my book, and speak in the first person, I trust the reader will not find me immoderately egotistic. I have not written to give myself importance in the eyes of the public, or from a feeling that my story, simply as mine, could have any great interest or value. Nearly all that is contained in the volume derives whatever value or importance it may have, from sources independent of my personality.

What is related as matter of fact, unless my memory has played me tricks, may be read with entire confidence. The principles and reasonings set forth, and the judgments

offered, speak for themselves, and must go for what they are worth. Truth is not mine, nor my reader's, and is the same whatever may be his or my opinions. It is above us both, and independent of us, and all that either of us should aim at is to ascertain and conform to it. I have no vocation to dogmatize or to teach. If what I say carries conviction, accept it; if not, reject it, or suspend judgment till better informed.

The reader will at once perceive that my book is not designed to flatter one or another sect or party. I have expressed freely, frankly, unreservedly, my honest thought of persons and things that have come in my way, the results of my most careful observations and of my best judgment. I have not addressed my work especially to Catholics or to non-Catholics, but to the public at large. My purpose has been to render to all who may take an interest in the matter, an account of my conversion to Catholicity, and to enable the curious in such matters to discover the connecting link between my past and my present life, in order to enable them to discover the connecting link between nature and grace, the natural and the supernatural, and to perceive that, in becoming a Catholic, a man has no occasion to divest himself of his nature, or to forego the exercise of his reason.

In my reference to Catholic faith and doctrine, I believe I am orthodox; but in all such matters I recognize the church, under God, as the only infallible teacher. I am a Catholic, and it would be in bad taste to seek to conceal or to disguise the fact. I have no wish to force my Catholic faith upon those who loathe its bare mention, but for myself I glory in it, and consider submission to the teaching of the church the noblest exercise I can make of my reason and free-will.

My book, however, is the free production of my own mind, the free expression of my own honest convictions as formed by my experience, the inspiration of grace and the teachings of Catholic faith and theology, and may be taken by my readers as a specimen of that freedom which Catholicity secures to all her children.

The temper of the book, I hope, will be found acceptable to every class of readers,—free from all bitterness, harshness, or severity. It is not a controversial work, but a simple narrative, which may or may not carry with it a moral; and my aim has been to treat all of whom I have occasion

to speak, with fairness and liberality, and to acknowledge cheerfully real worth wherever I find it. I may have erred in my judgments, but not from bigotry, prejudice, or an intolerant disposition.

I have aimed to tell my story simply, and to keep as clear as possible of all abstruse metaphysical or theological discussions; yet, as I had in some parts the profoundest problems of human life to deal with, and as my own path to the church led through the field of philosophy, I have not been able wholly to avoid them, and there are parts of the work which will have little interest for those who read only for amusement. I have aimed to write an instructive, not an amusing, book.

The historian of the aberrations of human reason during the last half-century will, if I am not much mistaken, find this volume not unworthy of his attention. The accounts I have given of the various sects, schools, and parties with which I came at different times in contact, together with the sketches I have ventured of their founders and chiefs, will be found, I think, devoid neither of interest nor value. These accounts and sketches might have been greatly extended, but I have made it a rule to confine myself to what served to illustrate my own story; and those contemporary movements and individuals that exerted little or no influence upon my own opinions or relations, I have passed over as foreign to my subject.

With these prefatory remarks, wholly unnecessary on my part, I commit my volume to the public to make or mar its fortune. It embodies no small portion of fifty years of an active, perhaps feverish, intellectual life, devoted to serious and earnest purposes: with what obstacles and with what results, it tells in a plain, unpretending style. In writing it, I have had occasion to review my whole past life, and to renew my thanks to Him who died that we might live, for having conducted me, after so many wanderings, from the abyss of doubt and infidelity to the light and truth of his Gospel, in the bosom of his church, where I find the peace and repose so long denied me.

New York, September 16, 1857.

CHAPTER I.—CHILDHOOD AND YOUTH.

I was born in the town of Stockbridge, Windsor County, Vermont, September 16, 1803. My father was a native of Hartford County, Connecticut; my mother of the beautiful

village of Keene, New Hampshire. At the age of six years I was placed with an aged couple in the town of Royalton to be brought up. The man, when I went to live with him, was upwards of sixty; his wife was about fifty. They were plain country people, living on a small farm, and supporting themselves by their own industry. They had been brought up in New-England Congregationalism, were honest, upright, strictly moral, and far more ready to suffer wrong than to do wrong, but had no particular religion, and seldom went to meeting.

I was treated with great kindness and affection, and as well brought up as could be expected from persons in their condition of life. They taught me to be honest, to owe no one any thing but good-will, to be frugal and industrious, to speak the truth, never to tell a lie under any circumstances, or to take what was not my own, even to the value of a pin; to keep the Sabbath, and never to let the sun go down on my wrath. In addition they taught me the Shorter Catechism, the Apostles' Creed, the Lord's Prayer, and a short evening prayer in rhyme, which ran,

> "Now I lay me down to sleep,
> I pray the Lord my soul to keep;
> If I should die before I wake
> I pray the Lord my soul to take."

Properly speaking I had no childhood, and have more of the child in my feelings now than at eight or ten years of age. Brought up with old people, and debarred from all the sports, plays, and amusements of children, I had the manners, the tone, and tastes of an old man before I was a boy. A sad misfortune; for children form one another, and should always be suffered to be children as long as possible. Both childhood and youth are quite too short with us, and the morals and manners of the country suffer from it.

I early learnt to read, and was from my earliest recollection fond of reading; but we had few books, and our neighbors had fewer. Our family library consisted of a Protestant version of the Scriptures, a London edition; Watts's *Psalms* and *Divine Songs*, and *The Franklin Primer*, to which were subsequently added Edwards's *History of Redemption;* Davies's *Sermons;* a History of the Indian Wars, by a Dr. Sanders, I believe, at one time President of the Vermont University at Burlington; a mutilated copy of *Philip Quarle*, a work of fiction, written in imitation of Defoe's *Robinson*

Crusoe; and during the war of 1812 with Great Britain, a weekly newspaper, published in Windsor by Alden Spooner. My reading was confined to these works, and principally to the Scriptures, all of which I had read through before I was eight, and a great part of which I knew by heart before I was fourteen years old.

My thoughts from my earliest recollection took a religious turn, and my greatest pleasure was in conversing, or in hearing others converse, on the subject of religion. When about nine years old, I was permitted to accompany a much older boy to "the middle of the town," about four miles distant from our residence, to witness a muster, or general training of a brigade of militia. On returning home, I was asked what I had seen to interest me. I answered that I had seen two old men talking on religion. In fact, I was so much interested in their discussion that I quite forgot the soldiers, though I came of a military family, and almost forgot to eat my card of gingerbread. The discussion, I remember, was on free-will and election, and I actually took part in it, stoutly maintaining free-will against Edwards, who confounds volition with judgment, and maintains that the will is necessarily determined by the state of the affections and the motives presented to the understanding.

The simple history of the Passion of our Lord, as I read it in the Evangelists, affected me deeply. I hung with delight on the mystery of Redemption, and my young heart often burned with love to our Blessed Lord, who had been so good as to come into the world, and to submit to the most cruel death of the cross that he might save us from our wicked dispositions, and make us happy forever in heaven. I wanted to know every thing about him, and I used to think of him frequently in the day and the night. Sometimes I seemed to hold long familiar conversations with him, and was deeply pained when any thing occurred to interrupt them. Sometimes, also, I seemed to hold a spiritual intercourse with the Blessed Mary, and with the holy Angel Gabriel, who had announced to her that she was to be the mother of the Redeemer. I was rarely less alone than when alone. I did not speculate on the matter. It all seemed real to me, and I enjoyed often an inexpressible happiness. I preferred to be alone, for then I could taste the sweets of silent meditation, and feel that I was in the presence of Jesus and Mary, and the holy angels; yet I had not been baptized, and had very little instruction except such as I had obtained from reading the Holy Scriptures.

The earliest wish I recollect to have formed with regard to my future life, was to be a minister of religion, and to devote myself to the work of bringing people to the knowledge and the love of God. For this, I longed to go to school, to get learning, to grow up, and to be a man. I early looked upon myself as one called and set apart to the service of religion. I had an irritable temper, and was subject to violent outbreaks of passion, but I tried hard to control myself, and neither to do nor to think any thing wrong, and, till I was man grown, I do not believe I ever suffered the sun to go down upon my wrath. I had my faults as well as others, and did many things which were by no means right or excusable; but my conscience was active, and I always felt a deep remorse for them, and was ready always to do all in my power, to submit to any humiliation however great, to repair the faults I committed, or the wrongs I did. I always felt that the next best thing to never doing wrong, was to own the wrong done, and endeavor to undo it. So it was with me in my childhood, till I was fourteen years of age, when I left the kind old people, who had thus far brought me up, and went forth into the world alone, to make my way as best I could.

My youth was not as blameless as my childhood, and it was far less happy. Religion, however, never lost its place in my thoughts. But unhappily, while I had strong religious affections and the elements of Christian belief, I belonged to no church, and had no definite creed. True, I had been taught the Shorter Catechism, but I was not taught it as something I must believe; and I soon learned that they who taught it to me did not themselves believe it. True, also, I was taught the Apostles' Creed, but I was not required to believe it, and received no instructions as to its sense. I probably did believe, however, the greater part of it. I believed in God the Father Almighty; that Jesus Christ was his only begotten Son; that he was conceived of the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, was crucified by the wicked Jews, under Pontius Pilate, was dead, and buried; that he rose again from the dead on the third day; that he ascended into heaven; that he sitteth at the right hand of the Father Almighty, whence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead. I believed in the Holy Ghost; the forgiveness of sins for Christ's sake; the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. But to the articles of the Creed affirming the Holy Catholic Church, and the Com-

munion of Saints, I attached no meaning; my attention was not called to them; and not till long years after did it occur to me to ask whether they meant any thing or nothing.

There is no doubt that I was well disposed to believe, and that, if I had been properly instructed in the Christian faith, I should have heartily received it, and held as fast to it as an unbaptized person, as one who is only a catechumen, can do; but, as it was, I attached very little definite meaning to what I was taught, and was open to any kind of influences by which I was surrounded. Nobody, however, told me that baptism was necessary; and nobody told me any thing about the church. The most I was told was, that I must "get religion," "experience religion," have "a change of heart," "be born again;" but how that was to be brought about, I could not understand. I took it for granted that I had not experienced religion, and I really wished I might be born again; but how I could be born again, or what I was to do in order to be born again, nobody explained to my understanding.

In the town in which I lived we had Congregationalists, called in my young days, "The Standing Order," Methodists, Baptists, Universalists, and Christians, or, as they insisted on the word being pronounced, *Christ-yans*. The Congregational meeting-house was four miles distant from our house, in the middle of the town, and we never attended it. The Methodists and *Christians*, a sect founded in New England by one Elias Smith, and one Abner Jones, in the year 1800, if I mistake not, held their meetings near by us, sometimes in a school-house, sometimes in private houses; and in the summer season, not unfrequently in a very pleasant grove. The Universalists were few, and so were the Baptists. The Methodists and *Christians* were the more numerous. I usually attended their meetings. They differed, I was told; but the only difference I could discover between them was, that the Methodist preachers appeared to have the stronger lungs; they preached in a louder tone, and when they preached, the people shouted more. I thought them the best, because they made the most noise, and gave the most vivid pictures of hell-fire, and the tortures of the damned. All I learned, however, from either was, that I must be born again or go to hell, get religion or be damned. The more I listened to them, the more I feared hell, and the less I loved God. Love gave place to terror; and I became constantly afraid that the devil would come and carry me

off bodily. I tried to get religion, and at times almost made up my mind to submit to the Methodists, and let them "bring me out."

One of our neighbors, an elderly woman, who had seen better days, had been well brought up and well educated, was a Congregationalist, a stanch adherent to the Standing Order. She was now very poor, and lived in a miserable log-hut on one corner of our farm, and was treated generally by our neighbors with great contempt, because she insisted on maintaining her self-respect and personal dignity, notwithstanding her poverty. I had a great affection for her, because I found her a woman of intelligence and refinement. I visited her one evening, when I was in great distress of mind, and told her my fears and my resolutions. She heard me with great patience, till I had concluded my story.

"My poor boy," she replied, "God has been good to you, and has no doubt gracious designs towards you. He means to use you for a purpose of his own, and you must be faithful to his inspirations. But go not with the Methodists or with any of the sects. They are New Lights, and not to be trusted. The Christian religion is not new, and Christians have existed from the time of Christ. These New Lights are of yesterday. You yourself know the founder of the *Christian* sect, and I myself knew personally both George Whitefield and John Wesley, the founders of Methodism. Neither can be right, for they come too late, and have broken off, separated from the body of Christians, which subsisted before them. When you join any body calling itself a Christian body, find out and join one that began with Christ and his apostles, and has continued to subsist the same without change of doctrine or worship down to our own times. You will find the true religion with that body, and nowhere else. Join it, obey it, and you will find rest and salvation. But beware of sects and New Lights: they will make you fair promises, but in the end will deceive you to your own destruction."

I was some twelve years old at the time, but the words made a deep impression upon my mind. They struck me as reasonable and just; and I think they prevented me from ever being a genuine, hearty Protestant, or a thorough-going radical even. She was not a Catholic, but her argument is one which, though I knew it not then, none save a Catholic can consistently urge. She was sincerely a Congregationalist, and held only the views which in my boyhood were

generally insisted on by the old Standing Order of New England. However erroneous were the views of the New-England Puritans, they retained a conception of the church of Christ, held that Christ had himself founded a church, established its order, and given it its ordinances, and taught that it was necessary to belong to it in order to be saved. The loose notions of the church, the humanism and transcendentalism, now so common among their descendants, were then unknown. They were as rigid and as consistent churchmen in their way as the Anglicans, and even more so.

But time went on, and after I was fourteen years of age, I was thrown upon a new world, into the midst of new and strange scenes, and exposed to new and corrupting influences. I fell in with new sectaries, universalists, deists, atheists and nothingarians, as they are called with us, who profess no particular religion. I still held fast to the belief in my need of religion, and there were times when my earlier feelings revived, and I enjoyed my silent meditations. But my young head became confused with the contradictory opinions I heard advanced, with the doubts and denials to which I listened, and for a time my mind was darkened, and I half persuaded myself that all religion was a delusion—the work of priestcraft or statecraft. I was in a labyrinth of doubt, with no Ariadne's thread to guide me out to the light of day. I was miserable, and knew not where to turn for relief. I felt that my own reason was insufficient to guide me; and the more I attempted by it alone to arrive at truth, the further I went astray, and the more uncertain and perplexed I became.

One day, when I was about nineteen years of age, I was passing by a Presbyterian meeting-house. It was Sunday, and the people were gathering for the service. The thought struck me that I would go in and join with them. It was a beautiful September day, in Malta, Saratoga County, New York. The air was soft and balmy, the sky was clear and serene, and it seemed as if all nature was enjoying its sweet Sabbath-day repose. I went into the meeting-house: it was long since I had been in a place of worship. The singing was, perhaps, not very good, but it soothed me, while it affected me even to tears. I listened reverently to the reading of the Scriptures, to the prayer, and to the sermon. There was nothing in the sermon that I remember. It was a common-place affair. But I went out from that meeting-house much affected, and feeling that I had missed

my way. As I pursued my journey, I could not help asking myself what I had gained by my speculations, and why it was that I must have no sympathy with my kind; why I must stand alone, and find no belief to sustain me, and have no worship to refresh me.

I have, said I, in my self-communing, done my best to find the truth, to experience religion, and to lead a religious life, yet here I am without faith, without hope, without love. I know not what to believe. I know not what to do. I know not whence I came, why I am here, or whither I go. My life is a stream that flows out of darkness into darkness. The world is dark to me, and not a ray of light even for one instant relieves it. My heart is sad, and I see nothing to hope for, or to live for. For me heaven is dispeopled, and the earth is a desert, a barren waste. Why is this so? Why does my heart rebel against the speculations of my mind? If doubt is all there is for me, why cannot I discipline my feelings into submission to it? Why this craving to believe when there is nothing to be believed? Why this longing for sympathy, when there is nothing to respond to my heart? Why this thirst for an unbounded good, when there is no good, when all is a mere show, an illusion, and nothing is real? Have I not mistaken my way?

Was I not told in the outset that, if I followed my own reason, it would lead me astray, that I should lose all belief, and find myself involved in universal doubt and uncertainty? Has it not been so? In attempting to follow the light of reason alone, have I not lost faith, lost the light of revelation, and plunged myself into spiritual darkness? I did not believe what these people said, and, yet, were they not right? They were. They told me to submit my reason to revelation. I will do so. I am incapable of directing myself. I must have a guide. I will hear the church. I will surrender, abnegate my own reason, which hitherto has only led me astray, and make myself a member of the church, and do what she commands me.

In a few days I told my experience to the Presbyterian minister of the town where I was pursuing my academic studies, went the same day, at his request, and told it to the Session of his church, and the Sunday following was baptized and received into the Presbyterian communion. I did not ask whether the Presbyterian Church was the true church or not, for the church question had not yet been fairly raised in my mind; and as it did not differ essentially

from the Standing Order, and claimed to be the true church, and was counted respectable, I was satisfied. What it believed was of little consequence, since I had resolved to abnegate my own reason, and take the church for my guide. My proceeding was precipitate, but after all was not rash, for it was logical, and justified by the resolution I had taken. So in October, 1822, I became a member of the Presbyterian Church, Ballston, Saratoga County, New York.

CHAPTER II.—PRESBYTERIAN EXPERIENCE.

THE Monday following my reception into the Presbyterian communion we had a covenant meeting, or a meeting of all the members of the church. The Presbyterians, like most of the Protestant sects in this country, adopt the doctrine of the old Donatists, that the church is composed of the elect, the just, or the saints only, and they therefore distinguish between the church and the congregation, or between those who are held to be saints, and those held to be sinners; that is, between those who profess to have been regenerated, and those who make no such pretension, although they may have been baptized. The church members, to the number of about six hundred, came together on Monday, and after being addressed by the pastor, and stirred up to greater zeal for the promotion of Presbyterianism, renewed their covenant obligations, and bound themselves to greater efforts for the conversion of sinners, the common name given to all not of the sect, even though members of the congregation, and born of Presbyterian parents. In this meeting we all solemnly pledged ourselves, not only to pray for the conversion of sinners, but to mark them wherever we met them, to avoid them, to have no intercourse with them that could be helped, and never to speak to them except to admonish them of their sins, or so far as it should be necessary on business. There was to be no interchange of social or neighborly visits between us and them, and we were to have even business relations with them only when absolutely necessary. We were by our manner to show all, not members of the Presbyterian Church, that we regarded them as the enemies of God, and therefore as our enemies, as persons hated by God, and therefore hated by us; and we were, even in business relations, always to give the preference to church members, and, as far as possible, without sacrificing our own interests, to treat those not members as outcasts from society, as pariahs; and thus, by appeals to their business interests, their

social feelings, and their desire to stand well in the community, to compel them to join the Presbyterian Church. The meeting was animated by a singular mixture of bigotry, uncharitableness, apparent zeal for God's glory, and a shrewd regard to the interests of this world.

About the time I speak of, and for several years after, meetings of the sort I have described, were common in the Presbyterian churches; and a movement was made, in 1827, to induce all the members throughout the Union to pledge themselves to non-intercourse with the rest of the community, except for their conversion, and to refuse in the common business affairs of life to patronize any one not a member of the church. How far it succeeded, I am not informed; but as, taking the country at large, the Presbyterians were but a small minority, and by no means able to control its business operations, I suppose it was only partially successful, and its abettors had to soften their rules a little so as to bring within the privileged the members of the other Evangelical sects.

It may readily be believed that the exhibition I saw was not over and above pleasing to me, and that it was only with a wry face that I took the pledges with the rest. I was in for it, and I would do as the others did. I saw at once that I had made a mistake, that I had no sympathy with the Presbyterian spirit, and should need a long and severe training to sour and elongate my visage sufficiently to enjoy the full confidence of my new brethren. Every day's experience proved it. In our covenant we had bound ourselves to watch over one another with fraternal affection. I was not long in discovering that this meant that we were each to be a spy upon the others, and to rebuke, admonish, or report them to the Session. My whole life became constrained. I dared not trust myself, in the presence of a church member, to a single spontaneous emotion; I dared not speak in my natural tone of voice, and if I smiled, I expected to be reported. The system of espionage in some European countries is bad enough, and it is no pleasant reflection that the man you are talking with may be a *mouchard*, and report your words to the *Préfet de Police;* but that is nothing to what one must endure as a Presbyterian, unless he has enough of malignity to find an indemnification for being spied in spying others. We were allowed no liberty, and dared enjoy ourselves only by stealth. The most rigid Catholic ascetic never imagined a discipline a thousandth

part as rigid as the discipline to which I was subjected. The slightest deviation was a mortal sin, the slightest forgetfulness was enough to send me to hell. I must not talk with sinners; I must take no pleasure in social intercourse with persons, however moral, amiable, well-bred, or worthy, if not members of the church; I was forbidden to read books written by others than Presbyterians, and commanded never to inquire into my belief as a Presbyterian, or to reason on it, or about it.

I tried for a year or two to stifle my discontent, to silence my reason, to repress my natural emotions, to extinguish my natural affections, and to submit patiently to the Calvinistic discipline. I spent much time in prayer and meditation, I read pious books, and finally plunged myself into my studies with a view of becoming a Presbyterian minister. But it would not do. I had joined the church because I had despaired of myself, and because, despairing of reason, I had wished to submit to authority. If the Presbyterian Church had satisfied me that she had authority, was authorized by Almighty God to teach and direct me, I could have continued to submit; but while she exercised the most rigid authority over me, she disclaimed all authority to teach me, and remitted me to the Scriptures and private judgment. "We do not ask you to take this as your creed," said my pastor, on giving me a copy of the Presbyterian Confession of Faith; "we do not give you this as a summary of the doctrines, you must hold, but as an excellent summary of the doctrines which we believe the Scriptures teach. What you are to believe is the Bible. You must take the Bible as your creed, and read it with a prayerful mind, begging the Holy Ghost to aid you to understand it aright." But while the church refused to take the responsibility of telling me what doctrines I must believe, while she sent me to the Bible and private judgment, she yet claimed authority to condemn and excommunicate me as a heretic, if I departed from the standard of doctrine contained in her Confession.

This I regarded as unfair treatment. It subjected me to all the disadvantages of authority without any of its advantages. The church demanded that I should treat her as a true mother, while she was free to treat me only as a stepson, or even as a stranger. Be one thing or another, said I; either assume the authority and the responsibility of teaching and directing me, or leave me with the responsibility my freedom. If you have authority from God, avow it, and

exercise it. I am all submission. I will hold what you say, and do what you bid. If you have not, then say so, and forbear to call me to an account for differing from you, or disregarding your teachings. Either bind me or loose me. Do not mock me with a freedom which is no freedom, or with an authority which is illusory. If you claim authority over my faith, tell me what I must believe, and do not throw upon me the labor and responsibility of forming a creed for myself; if you do not, if you send me to the Bible and private judgment, to find out the Christian faith the best way I can, do not hold me obliged to conform to your standards, or assume the right to anathematize me for departing from them.

My position was a painful one, and I could not endure it. I had gained nothing, but lost much, by joining the Presbyterian Church. I had given up the free exercise of my own reason for the sake of an authoritative teacher, and had obtained no such teacher. I had despaired of finding the truth by my own reason, and had now nothing better, nor so good, because I could not exercise it freely. Certainly I had been too hasty, and reckoned without my host. After all, what reason had I to regard this Presbyterian Church as the true church of Christ? "Go not after the New Lights," said my old Congregationalist friend. Are not these Presbyterians New Lights, as much as the Methodists and the Christians? If our Lord founded a church and has a church on earth, it must reach back to his time, and come down in unbroken succession from the apostles. But the Presbyterian Church is a recently formed body, not three hundred years old. It was founded in Scotland by men who had been Roman Catholics, and who had deserted the faith in which they had been reared; and in England, by men who had belonged to the Church of England, which itself had broken off from the Catholic Church. Were these men authorized by an express commission from God? Did they act by authority? or did they follow their own private judgment, and against the authority which they had previously recognized? The latter certainly. Then what reason have I for regarding the church they founded as the church of Christ?

I was answered that the church of Christ had become corrupt, and been for a long series of ages perverted to a papistical and prelatical church, and these men were reformers, and simply labored to restore the church to its primi-

tive purity and simplicity. But had they a warrant from Christ to do that? Or did they act on their own responsibility, without warrant? If you say the former, where is the proof? If the latter, how can their acts bind me? Am not I a man, and as a man have I not as much right to follow my private opinion as they had to follow theirs? But they follow the Bible. Be it so. But was it the Bible as they understood it, or as it was understood by their Catholic predecessors and contemporaries?—You forget, the Catholic Church rejected the Bible, and did not follow it at all.—Yet she preserved the Bible and taught that it was given by inspiration of God, and it was from her that the reformers got it. She did not own that she rejected the Scriptures, or that she taught, or allowed any thing to be taught, inconsistent with them. How know I that her understanding of the Bible was not as good as the understanding of it by the reformers? They thought differently from her, but were they infallible? If they had a right to break from her and set up their private understanding of Scripture, why have I not the right to break from them and from the Presbyterian Church, follow my private understanding, and set up a church of my own?

It was clear to me that the Presbysterian Church, though the church of one class of the reformers, was not and could not be the church of Christ, and therefore it could have no legitimate authority over me. If Christ had a church on earth which he had founded, and which had authority to teach in his name, it was evidently the Roman Catholic Church. But that church, of course, was out of the question. It was every thing that was vile, base, odious, and demoralizing. It had been condemned by the judgment of mankind, and the thought of becoming a Roman Catholic found and could find at that time no entrance into my mind. I should sooner have thought of turning Jew, Mahometan, Gentoo, or Buddhist. What, then, was I to do? There was no alternative. It was the Catholic Church or no church. All the so-called Protestant churches were New Lights, were of yesterday, founded by fallible men, without any warrant from God, without any authority but their private interpretation of Scripture. I cannot accept any one of them as having any authority to teach or direct me. Being the work of men, honest men, learned men, pious men, if you will, they have no authority over my conscience, and no right to hold me amenable to them. Then, since I cannot be a Cath-

olic, I must be a no-church man, and deny all churches, make war upon every sect claiming the slightest authority in matters of faith or conscience.

I was at this time about twenty-one years of age. The question with me was not what, but whom, I was to believe; not what doctrines I must embrace, but what authority I was to obey, or on what authority I was to take my belief. As to particular doctrines, they did not trouble me. I paid very little attention to them. I regarded them of minor consideration, and never entered very deeply into their investigation. The important thing with me, from the first, was, to find out the rule of faith. I had not found it in my youthful and uninformed reason, and had submitted to the Presbyterian Church, hoping to find it in her authority. I failed to find it there, and, the Catholic Church being out of the question, I was forced, by the necessity of the case, to fall back on the Scriptures interpreted by my own private judgment for myself.

In becoming a Presbyterian on the ground I did, I committed a mistake, and placed myself in a false position, which it took me years to rectify. It was a capital blunder. Not that I was insincere, or governed by bad motives, but because, feeling the insufficiency of my own reason to guide me, I turned my back on reason, and took up with what I supposed to be authority without a rational motive for believing it divinely commissioned. As far as I could, I abnegated my own rational nature, denied reason to make way for revelation, rational conviction to make way for authority. Unhappily, the religious belief of my Protestant countrymen, as far as religious belief they have, is built on scepticism, and hence, if they think at all, they have a perpetual struggle in their minds between faith and reason. The two are presented, not each as the other's complement, but as antagonistic, the one to advance only over the dead body of the other. All those with whom I came into relation, either denied reason to make way for revelation, or revelation to make way for reason. At least such was their tendency. The one class declaimed against reason, used reason against reason, and sometimes assigned, apparently, a very good reason why reason ought not to be used. The other class either openly denied all supernatural revelation, or, admitting it in words, explained away all its supernaturalness, and brought it within the sphere of the natural order, and subjected it to the dominion of natural reason.

This was the natural result of Calvinism, which was the dominant doctrine of the American people; and, so far as they have any notions of Christianity at all as a revealed religion, the great majority of them, whether they accept or reject it, are even yet Calvinists. They apprehend Christianity always through Calvinistic spectacles, and under Calvinistic forms. The fundamental doctrine of Calvinism is, that man by his fall lost his natural spiritual faculties, and became totally depraved, incapable by nature of any thing but sin. Grace is conceived therefore as opposed to nature, revelation as opposed to reason. A nature that is totally depraved cannot be redeemed, but must be supplanted or superseded by grace; a totally depraved reason is incapable of a rational act, and therefore revelation cannot be addressed to it to supply its weakness, or to place it in relation with truth lying in an order above its natural reach; but, if conceived at all, must be conceived as a substitute for reason, as discarding reason, and taking its place. Hence it is my countrymen, receiving their first notions of Christianity through Calvinism, are never able to reconcile faith and reason, or to harmonize nature and grace. They feel, against the dicates of common-sense, that they must either deny the one or the other. Some try to assert both, but find that their life is one of painful struggle precisely where peace and repose are promised by the Gospel.

In general, those Protestants commonly called Orthodox, when they are sincere and earnest, when their religion is not put on or retained for a sinister purpose, retain their belief only by refusing to examine its grounds. The eminent Dr. Payson, one of the most distinguished Calvinistic ministers of New England in the first half of the present century, records in his diary his temptations to doubt even the divine existence, and says that the devil suggested to him arguments against the existence of God, which, if published, would shake the faith of more than one half of Christendom. I cite from memory, but believe his expression was much stronger. My own Presbyterian pastor told me, time and again, not to allow myself to read any book touching the grounds of my belief as a Presbyterian, or even to think on the subject. Large numbers of Calvinists, in their confidential intercourse with me, have assured me that the only way in which they could retain their faith, their belief even in revelation, was by refusing, even in their own minds, to reason on the subject. Their belief, as far as belief they have,

is and must be a blind belief, an effort of the will alone, without any assent of the understanding; for they start with the assumption that reason is totally depraved, and therefore a false light, a deceptive guide. The gravest objection to Calvinism is its denunciation of reason, and its attempt to build up a system of theology on revelation made to an irrational subject.

God gave me reason, I said, in my self-communings. It is my distinguishing faculty, and to abnegate it is to surrender my essential character as a man, and to sink myself, theoretically, to the level of the brute creation. Revelation, if revelation there be, must be made to me as a man, as a rational subject. Take away my reason, and you can as well make a revelation to an ox or a horse, a pig or an ass, as to me. It demands reason to receive revelation, and the natural to receive the supernatural. If there is no natural, there can be no supernatural. If I am totally depraved, I am incapable of being redeemed; and if my reason is deceptive and never to be trusted, how am I to know that what I take to be revelation is revelation? It is God's word, you say, and God cannot lie. But how am I to know that it is God's word, or that there is any God at all, if my reason is totally depraved, and to be discarded as a false light? No, no, it will not do. We cannot build faith on scepticism; and just in proportion as we discredit reason, we must discredit revelation. Reason must at least be the preamble to faith, and nature must precede and be presupposed by grace.

I must then, I continued, revoke the act of surrender which I made of my reason to authority on entering the Presbyterian Church; for it was an irrational, an unmanly act. I offered in it no reasonable obedience or submission to God. It was a blind submission, and really no submission of my reason at all. It was a cowardly act, the act of an intellectual desperado, although the motive was good. I reclaim my reason, I reclaim my manhood, and henceforth I will, let come what may, be true to my reason, and preserve the rights and dignity of my human nature. This resolution, of course, separated me from Presbyterianism. The peculiar Presbyterian doctrines I had never believed or professed to believe, except on the authority of the Presbyterian Church. Grant her authority from God to teach, I was logician enough to understand that I must believe whatever she taught, whether I could or could not reconcile it with my own reason. That authority taken away, then I

was not bound to believe her doctrines, unless I found reasons for doing so elsewhere.

The doctrine of unconditional election and reprobation, and the doctrine that God foreordains the wicked to sin necessarily, that he may damn them justly, I found difficult to swallow, and still more difficult to digest. My honest pastor told me that he regarded the doctrine as a hard doctrine, as revolting to human nature, and he had tried in the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church, in 1821, to get it modified, or rescinded altogether, but failed by one or two votes. The doctrine was repugnant to my reason; and having settled it, that revelation could never contain any thing repugnant to reason, I rejected it without taking the trouble to inquire whether it was Scriptural or not. It is unreasonable, it is unjust, and therefore cannot be taught in the Scriptures, if they are written by divine inspiration. When a Presbyterian, I simply asked: What does the Presbyterian Church teach? But having discovered that the Presbyterian Church was a self-created body, and without any authority from God, and having adopted reason as my test or criterion of truth, I asked simply: What is or is not contrary to reason?

I felt, as every thinking man feels and always must feel, that reason is insufficient, and that, with no other guide, it is impossible to attain to all truth, or always to avoid all error; but it was the best guide I had, and all I could do was to exercise it freely and honestly upon all subjects,—to give it fair play, and abide the result. I did not absolutely reject the Scriptures, nor absolutely accept them. As the word of God, they were infallible; but they were and could be the word of God only in the sense intended by the Holy Ghost, and that sense I had no infallible means of ascertaining. I could not, then, feel myself bound by the strict letter of the Scriptures, and felt that I had a right to interpret them by my own understanding, and to explain them in accordance with the dictates of natural reason. I consequently, without rejecting them, attenuated their practical authority, and made reason a rule for them, instead of taking them, as the believer must, as a rule for reason. I thus passed from so-called Orthodox Christianity to what is sometimes denominated liberal Christianity. This was my first notable change,—a change from a supernaturalist to a rationalist. In fact, it should not be regarded so much as a change as the commencement of my intellectual life, for I was as yet only twenty-one years of age.

CHAPTER III.—BECOME A UNIVERSALIST.

I did not leave Presbyterianism because I had found another church, or another system of doctrine, perfectly satisfactory to my reason—one by which I felt I could be willing to live and die. I rejected Presbyterianism because I had no good reason for holding it, and because it could not meet the want I felt of an authoritative teacher. It did not even claim to be infallible, conceded that it might err, and could not give any proof that it had been instituted by Christ and his apostles, or that its founders acted under a divine commission. These were sufficient reasons for not continuing a Presbyterian, but not for embracing any other particular sect. Where, then was I to go? What was I to believe?

I was unwilling to be an unbeliever, and felt deeply the need of having a religion of some sort. What should it be? Liberal Christianity was a vague term, and presented nothing definite or positive. Its chief characteristic was the denial of what was called Orthodoxy, and taking nature and reason for the rule of faith. The only definite form under which I was acquainted with it was that of Universalism, then far less generally diffused than it is now. Prior to becoming a Presbyterian, I had read several Universalist books, and been initiated into the mysteries of Universalism by a sister of my mother, who had in her youth listened to the preaching of Dr. Elhanan Winchester, one of the earliest Universalist preachers in America. Dr. Winchester had been a Calvinistic Baptist minister, and had, while a Baptist, acquired considerable reputation as a zealous, fervent, and eloquent preacher,—a reputation which recalled and almost rivalled that of the famous George Whitefield, one of the original Oxford Methodists. He preached in various parts of the United States and Great Britain, and stood very high with his sect. At the very height of his success as a Baptist, he began to doubt the doctrine of endless punishment. Inquiry led him to reject it, and to embrace the doctrine of the final salvation or restoration of all men, and even of the fallen angels, thus reviving the doctrine said to have been held by Origen in the third century, though probably so said without sufficient warrant. He preached and wrote much in defense of his favorite tenet, and, though preceded by that eccentric Irishman, John Murray, the first who avowedly preached universal salvation in the United States, he must be justly regarded as the founder of American Uni-

versalism. He had some pretensions to learning, but no philosophy, and very little theological science. He wrote several books in defence of universal restoration, among which his *Dialogues*, his *Lectures on the Prophecies*, borrowed in great part from a work on the same subject by Dr. Thomas Newton, an Anglican divine, I believe, and an epic poem, celebrating the triumph of the empire of Christ, were the more noticeable. I forget the exact title of the poem, but I remember that the author tells us in the preface that it was written in the course of three months, during his leisure moments, although it makes a good-sized duodecimo volume in close print, and that, if he had devoted all his time to it, he could have written it in a much briefer period. I recollect nothing in the poem to throw any doubt on this statement. The poem certainly was not equal to the *Iliad*, *Paradise Lost*, or the *Divina Commedia*, and not much superior to the *Fredoniad* or the *Napolead*,—two of our many American epics known, I fear, to very few American readers.

My aunt had placed these works in my hands when I was between fourteen and fifteen years of age, and aided by her brilliant and enthusiastic commentaries, they had shaken my early belief in future rewards and punishments, and unsettled my mind on the most important points of Christian faith. Besides the works of Mr. Winchester, I had also read a work on universal salvation, by Dr. Chauncy, a learned and highly esteemed Congregationalist minister in the last century, in Boston, Massachusetts. Dr. Chauncy was the son of President Chauncy of Harvard College, and was born in Boston, January 1, 1705. He was ordained pastor of the First Congregational church in Boston, the church in Chauncy Place, 1727, and continued to be its pastor till his death, February 10, 1787, in the 83d year of his age. He was strongly attached to the American cause in the strŭggle of the Colonies with the mother country, and rendered it important services. He was vehemently opposed to George Whitefield, the New Lights, and the religious enthusiasm which Whitefield's preaching excited, as also to Episcopacy, which he could in no manner tolerate. George Whitefield was an Englishman, a student of Oxford, and a presbyter of the Anglican Church. He was one of the original Methodists, and associated with John Wesley, from whom he subsequently separated on the question of unconditional election and reprobation. He visited the Colonies several times, and finally

died and was buried in Newburyport, Massachusetts. In one of his numerous visits to this country, Dr. Chauncy met him as he was landing on the wharf in Boston, and taking him by the hand, said: "Mr. Whitefield, I am sorry you have come to this country. I am sorry to see you here." "No doubt of it," replied the missionary, "and so is the devil." The edition of Dr. Chauncy's book which I read was a moderate-sized octavo, printed in London, without the author's name, and I am not aware that it has ever been reprinted in this country. I do not recollect the work very distinctly, nor the precise ground on which the author defends the final salvation of all men; but my impression is that he urges it from the universality of the atonement, and the nature of punishment, which he holds is purgative or reformatory, not vindictive. The book was marked by a show of learning and some ability, but I thought it rather dull and heavily written.

About the same time I read another work, called *Calvinism Improved*, written by Dr. Joseph Huntington, pastor of the Congregational Church in Coventry, Connecticut. Dr. Huntington lived in the last century, and was of the same family with the Hon. Samuel Huntington, one of the signers of the Declaration of American Independence. His book was not published till after his death, and I am not aware that he was ever suspected during his lifetime of holding the doctrine of universal salvation. The work has not much method, but is written in a free, easy, flowing, and attractive style. The author starts with the Calvinistic premises of imputed righteousness and salvation by grace without works, and concludes the salvation of all men. He supposes two covenants: the covenant of works, made by Almighty God with Adam as federal head of mankind in the natural order; and the covenant of grace, made by the Father with the Son, the Federal Head of the human race in the spiritual order. The first covenant failed, and all mankind fell under the wrath of God, died in Adam, and were condemned to everlasting death; but the Son, becoming incarnate, fulfilled the covenant of works for men, expiated the guilt incurred by the human race, and under the covenant of grace redeems, restores, and saves them. Works have nothing to do with salvation, which is a work of pure grace. Under the covenant of works no man can be saved, and, if works entered into the covenant of grace, it would no longer be a covenant of grace. The sinner is saved by the

covenant of grace alone, not in consideration of any good thing in him or done by him. He is saved solely by the free sovereign act of God imputing to him, or counting as his, the righteousness of Christ. This doctrine which Calvinism asserts, but confines to the elect only, Dr. Huntington extends to all men. He proves from the Scriptures that the atonement was made for all men, and was an ample and abundant satisfaction for the sins of the whole world. Hence, all men must be included in the covenant of grace, not a few only, and Christ must be regarded as the head of every man. In this covenant of grace God agrees to reckon the sins of all men as the sins of Christ, and to impute the righteousness of Christ to all who have transgressed. He transfers the sins to Christ, and punishes them in him; and then, finding his justice satisfied, pardons the sinner, transfers to him the righteousness of Christ, counts him just for Christ's sake, and receives him to his peace and love.

In the day of judgment, men will first be judged by the covenant of works, under which all will be condemned, for all have failed to keep that covenant; and the Judge, speaking in the name of the law of works, shall say to all the human family: "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels." They shall then be judged under the covenant of grace; and the Judge, in consideration of the fact that the penalty incurred by the breach of the covenant of works has been borne and fully expiated by Christ in his own person, shall say, speaking in the name of free grace: "Come, ye blessed of my Father, enter into the kingdom of heaven, prepared for you from the foundation of the world." Thus the law is justified by the innocent suffering for the guilty, has its full and perfect vindication, and yet all men are saved,—yet, I might add, without personal sanctity,—a point, in the author's estimation, of no great importance. The good doctor does not shrink from making God the author of all our actions whether good or bad; and to the objection that sin is of a personal nature and its guilt is not transferable, he replies that sin is no more personal than justice, and that it is as easy for God to transfer our sins to Christ, as it is for him to transfer Christ's righteousness to us. Sin is, he says, God's property, God has the sovereign dominion over it, and may do with it what seems to him good, and transfer it to whom he pleases.

A neighbor put into my hands also a *Treatise on the*

Atonement, by Hosea Ballou. Mr. Ballou was a native of New Hampshire, originally a Calvinistic Baptist, but he became a Universalist through the influence of some members of his family, who had been converted directly or indirectly by the preaching and writings of Dr. Elhanan Winchester. He was, I think, of French descent, the son of a small New-England farmer, and obliged in his youth to assist his father and elder brothers in the cultivation of the farm, and in supporting the family. Nature was bountiful to him, both physically and intellectually. She gave him a tall athletic frame, symmetrical and finely moulded, handsome features, and an air of dignity and authority. His natural genius and ability fitted him to take rank with the most distinguished men the country has produced; but, unhappily, his education was very defective, and his acquired knowledge and information were even to the last very limited. But his intellect was naturally acute, active, fertile, and vigorous. He always struck me—and I knew him well in the later years of his life—as one who, if he chose, might excel in whatever he undertook. In his earlier years, he was regarded as harsh, bitter, and sarcastic in his temper; but when I knew him personally, he was witty, indeed, fond of his joke, like most New Englanders, but an agreeable and kind-hearted old gentleman, very fond of children, and possessing great power to fascinate young men, and win their confidence and affection. In my boyhood he was settled in Barnard, Vermont, about five miles from the old people with whom I resided, and I often heard them speak of him, as some of their relatives belonged to his congregation. He was then a young man, but distinguished. From Barnard he removed to Portsmouth, New Hampshire, and after a short residence there he removed to Boston, where he continued to reside till his death, which occurred five or six years ago. He was the patriarch of American Universalism, and, at the time when I became a Universalist minister, was its oracle, very nearly its pope.

It is many years since I have seen a copy of his *Treatise on the Atonement*, and I am not certain that I have read it since my youth. It gave a new phase to Universalism. Winchester, Chauncy, Huntington, Dan Foster, John Murray, and the Englishman, John Relly, the fathers of modern Universalism in Great Britain, Ireland, and the United States, had been what are called orthodox Protestants, and retained their early views with the exception of the single point of

the endless punishment of the wicked. They held the mysteries of the Trinity, the Incarnation, the expiatory Atonement, and endeavored to prove the final salvation of all men by Scriptural exegesis, and arguments drawn from the love and mercy of God. Mr. Ballou changes the whole ground, and attacks the whole fabric of so-called Orthodox Christianity. He adopts Arian views as to the person of Christ, and labors throughout his Treatise to demolish the doctrine of satisfaction, or of an expiatory sacrifice. He is the first American writer I am aware of, who combines the doctrines of modern Unitarians with Universalism. He maintains that God demanded no expiation, that no expiatory sacrifice was needed, for God pardons the sinner on simple repentance and reformation of life, and an expiatory sacrifice, even if required, could not have been made. He excludes grace, all transferable merit of the Head to the members, and maintains that grace is nothing but the irrevocable decrees of God irresistibly executing themselves in the government of the world; he denies free-will, denies accountability, denies a future judgment, denies all rewards and punishments, denies virtue, denies sin, in all except the name, and consequently the whole moral order. Sin, according to him, originates in the flesh, in the body, and does not affect the soul, the spirit, which remains pure, uncontaminated, whatever our fleshly defilements,—an old Gnostic and Manichean heresy, which in early times was thought to open the door to gross disorders. Sin, pertaining only to the body, cannot survive its dissolution, but is deposited with it in the grave. Therefore, "he that is dead is freed from sin."

This was the ground on which Mr. Ballou placed his defense of universal salvation. Against the doctrine of endless punishment he uses the various Scriptural arguments used by his predecessors, apparently without perceiving their irrelevancy. He argues against it from the assumed injustice of all punishment not reformatory in its intention and nature, and also from the justice as well as from the love of God. God is the author of all our actions, and therefore of sin. He has no right to punish us eternally for sins which, when he made us, he not only foresaw, but foreordained, predetermined us to commit. It is clear that the conception of grace does not belong to his system, and that he demands the salvation of all men, not from the mercy, but from the justice of God, as a right, not as a favor. These views are

set forth and defended with great freedom and boldness, with wonderful acuteness and power, in language, clear, simple, forcible, and at times beautiful, and even eloquent. A book fuller of heresies, and heresies of the most deadly character, not excepting Theodore Parker's *Discourse of Matters pertaining* to *Religion*, has probably never issued from the American press, or one better calculated to carry away a large class of young, ingenuous, and unformed minds. The heresies are indeed old, but they were nearly all original with the author. He had never read them, and there were no books within his reach, at the time when he wrote his Treatise, from which he could derive them. "My only aids in writing my *Treatise on the Atonement*," said he personally to me, in answer to a question I put to him, "were the Bible, Ethan Allen's *Oracles of Reason*," a deistical work, "and my own reflections." In the circumstances under which it was written, it was certainly a most remarkable production; and if it did the author no credit as a sound thinker, it certainly entitled him to rank among the most original thinkers of our times. It is, however, an admirable commentary on the Protestant rule of faith—the Bible without note or comment, interpreted by every one for himself. The book made a deep impression on my young mind, although I was very far from accepting all its doctrines or all its arguments. It was subtle, yet even in my youth I detected some portion of its sophistry, and found it repugnant to my moral sentiments and convictions.

These works, together with some popular works openly warring against all revealed religion, indeed against all religion, whether revealed or natural, I had read before becoming a Presbyterian. They had a pernicious influence on my mind. They unsettled it, loosed it from its moorings, and filled me with doubt. I had in my despair gone to the Presbyterian Church, in order to get rid of the doubts they had excited, and to be taught the truth. Presbyterianism not being the true church, being, in fact, only a self-constituted body, though she silenced these doubts for a brief time, could not solve or remove them. When I was forced to admit that Presbyterianism had no authority in the matter, I was necessarily forced back on the point whence it had taken me up, when I believed, so far as I believed any thing, the doctrine of Universalism. The truth is, my mind was unsettled, and in reality had been from the time my well-meaning aunt had undertaken to initiate me into the doctrine of

Universalism, and I had adhered to any fixed doctrines only by spasmodic efforts. In reality my mind continued unsettled for many years later than the period I am now treating of. I had no repose of mind, and found none till I got back to the Apostles' Creed, and found admission into the bosom of the Holy Catholic Church. But this by the way.

I could not, following my own reason, and without any divinely-commissioned teacher, have believed in the doctrine of the eternal punishment of the wicked. It seemed to me unjust. I could conceive it just, only on condition that God had given us an infallible means of knowing the truth, and sufficient power, naturally or supernaturally, of always obeying it, and resisting all temptation to evil. These I could not perceive had been given. The Protestant sophism could not deceive me. The Scriptures might, indeed, be infallible in themselves, but they were and could be to me only what I understood them to be. They were to me solely in my understanding of them, and my understanding of them was not infallible. I might err as to their sense, and entirely misinterpret them. Besides, only about one-twentieth of mankind can read, and to those who cannot read the Bible is a sealed book; for them it is as if it were not. What is to become of them? How are they to know the truth?—But all should know how to read. Be it so; yet they do not all know how to read, and we must deal with them as they are. They may die before they can learn to read the Bible.—But their natural light will suffice for them. Then the Scriptures are superfluous. Yet our natural light, even the best we have, is dim, our natural reason is weak, and to err is human. We have no infallible means of knowing the truth, of knowing what it is that God requires of us, the belief and worship that will be acceptable to him.

Nor is this the worst. We are not only weak to know, but we are even weaker to perform. None of us do as well as we know. The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak. I see the right, I approve it, and yet pursue the wrong. My will is weak, and my appetites and passions are strong. I am surrounded with temptations to which my firmest resolves succumb. I feel the want of a moral power that I find not. Now it cannot be that a just and good God has placed me in this world in the midst of so many seductions, surrounded by so many enemies to my virtue, where not to fail is a miracle—left me in so much darkness, so frail and so morally weak in myself, and yet attached the penalty of

eternal death even to my slightest transgressions. He knoweth our frame, he considereth our weakness, and hath compassion on us. These were reasons sufficient, I thought, for rejecting endless punishment. Indeed, the doctrine of endless punishment, as held by Christians, pertains to the supernatural order, and would not be just, if man had been left to the natural order, and had not received supernatural gifts and graces. It presupposes man to have been placed under a supernatural providence, and that he has done more than abuse or misuse his natural powers. It is inflicted for the abuse of supernatural graces, which, if properly used, would have enabled us to merit the beatitude of heaven. To deny the supernatural aids, and yet assert the endless punishment of the wicked, is to outrage the natural sense of justice common to all men.

As to the positive part of Universalism, I felt less certain, both because I was not perfectly satisfied that the Scriptures taught it, and because I had a lurking doubt of the divine inspiration and authority of the Scriptures themselves. But having made up my mind that the endless punishment of the wicked was a thing not to be dreaded, I felt the less scruple on the subject, as no grave consequences would or could follow even an error on the subject. The question of the authority of the Scriptures, I waived as far as possible; and I honestly thought at the time that they might be and ought to be explained in the sense of the final salvation, or final happiness of all men. Taking reason for my guide and authority, I supposed that the Scriptures were to be explained in accordance with reason, so as to teach a rational doctrine; and certainly, I said, Universalism is a far more rational doctrine than its opposite. It may be that it is not proved by the strict letter of Scripture, but the letter killeth, it is the spirit that giveth life; and we must not be held to a strictly literal interpretation. We must allow ourselves great latitude of interpretation, and look at the general intent and scope of the whole, rather than at mere verbal statements.

I was the more ready to adopt these loose notions of Scriptural interpretation from the fact that, in falling back from Presbyterianism on my own reason, imperfect as I knew it to be, I necessarily excluded from revelation the revelation of any thing supernatural or above reason. The revelation might be supernaturally made, and so far I could admit the supernatural; but it could be the revelation of no supernatu-

ral matter, or truth transcending the natural order. A revelation of supernatural truth, of an order of truth or of things whose nature could not be subjected to the judgment of natural reason, would demand a supernaturally endowed and assisted teacher and judge, to bring it within the reach of my natural understanding. I rejected, therefore, at once, all the mysteries of faith; treated them as *non avenus*, and reduced Christianity to a system of natural religion, or of moral and intellectual philosophy. If left to my natural reason, I could not accept what was beyond the reach of natural reason. Natural reason thus became the measure of revealed truth; and if so, I had the right to reject every interpretation of Scripture that deduced from it a doctrine which reason could not comprehend and approve. If I retained any respect for the Bible, I must give to its language a free and rational interpretation.

Moreover, the main thing could not be to discover and know the exact truth. That could not be what God required of us, for, if it had been, he would have furnished us with facile and infallible means of doing it. What I should aim at was not so much the truth as the exercise of reason, its development and cultivation. So, even if Universalism should turn out to be not true, I need not disturb myself, if I developed my faculties, and conducted myself as a man. Consequently, as Universalism appeared to me the most reasonable of all doctrines known to me, I need not hesitate to profess and even to preach it. I accordingly professed myself a Universalist, and in the twenty-second year of my age became a Universalist minister.

CHAPTER IV.—UNIVERSALISM UNSATISFACTORY.

After leaving Presbyterianism, I devoted some months to the reading of the Scriptures, and such Universalist publications as were then extant, or at least such as were within my reach. In the autumn of 1825, I applied for and received a letter of fellowship as a preacher from the General Convention of Universalists, which met that year in Hartland, Vt. I remained for a year in Vermont, continuing my studies, part of the time with the Reverend Samuel C. Loveland, a man of some learning, the compiler of a Greek lexicon of the New Testament, of no great merit, and part of the time by myself alone, and preaching on Sundays in various towns in the State, chiefly in Windsor, Rutland, and Rockingham counties. In the summer of 1826, I was or-

dained an evangelist by a Universalist association, which met that year at Jaffrey, N. H. The sermon was preached, I think, by the Rev. Charles Hudson, the ordaining prayer was made by the Rev. Paul Dean, and the charge was given by the Rev. Edward Turner.

Mr. Hudson was pastor of a Universalist society in Westminster, Mass., and professed himself a Restorationist. He has since figured a good deal in politics, been several times a member of the General Court of Massachusetts, a member of the Governor's Council, and several years in Congress. Under the Taylor-Fillmore administration, he was naval officer of Boston and Charlestown, and after that connected with the *Boston Atlas;* but what or where he is now, I am not informed. He was then a young man, very industrious, very conceited, very disputatious, with moderate learning, fair logical ability, and no fancy or imagination—a dry, hard man, and an exceedingly dull and uninteresting preacher. I enjoyed, however, a comfortable nap under his sermon. He could not endure Mr. Ballou's doctrine of no punishment after death, and pretended to be able to prove the final restoration of all men and devils from the Scriptures.

Mr. Dean was a native of Barnard, Vt., adjoining Royalton, and my eldest sister had been brought up in his father's family. He was at the time pastor of the Bulfinch Street Universalist Society in Boston, and regarded as the most popular preacher in the order, after Hosea Ballou, and many even preferred him. He was a handsome man, with a pleasing address, genial manners, and a most winning smile. He was a Restorationist, a Trinitarian, perhaps only a Sabellian, and by no means an admirer of Mr. Ballou, with whom he was on unfriendly terms. He ultimately, however, left the Universalist denomination, united with the Unitarians, and was preaching, when I last heard from him, for a Unitarian congregation somewhere in the Old Bay State. Mr. Turner was also a Restorationist, minister at the time to the Universalist society in Portsmouth, N. H., though I am not certain but it was in Charlestown, Mass. He was a tall, majestic person, of grave and venerable aspect, a chaste and dignified speaker, and the best sermonizer I ever knew among Universalists. But he had too refined and cultivated a taste to be a popular Universalist preacher, and finally, I believe, followed my example, and associated with the Unitarians.

At the time of my ordination, those who believed in a

future limited punishment, and those who denied all punishment after death, were associated together in one body, under the common name of Universalists. Subsequently, however, a division took place, and a portion of the former separated from the General Convention, as it was called, and took the name of Restorationists. This schism was formed mainly through the instrumentality of Adin Ballou, a distant relative of Hosea Ballou. He was a young convert from some evangelical sect—I forget what sect—and was full of zeal against the doctrine of no future punishment. He took with him Messrs. Dean, Turner, and Hudson, and several other ministers less known, and formed of them a distinct sect. But the majority even of those who held to a limited punishment after death, remained with the General Convention, and the Restorationist sect, after a few years of a fitful existence, became extinct. Its members for the most part have coalesced, I believe, with the Unitarians. I never went with the sect, though I was never one of those Universalists who restrict the consequences of our acts done in the body, whether good or bad, to this life. On that subject I adopted a theory of my own, which I afterwards found to be very generally adopted by American Unitarians. Mr. Adin Ballou did not expire with his sect. He became a socialist, and founded the community of Hopedale; and when I heard last from him, he was a spiritualist, spiritist, or devil-worshipper, conversing with spirits, and believing in Andrew Jackson Davis and the Fox girls.

In October, 1826, I returned to the State of New York, in which I had resided most of the time since I was fourteen years of age. I stopped a short time in Fort Anne and Whitehall. I resided for the greater part of a year in Litchfield, Herkimer County, then a year in Ithaca, a pleasant village at the head of Cayuga Lake, surrounded by varied and picturesque scenery, well worthy the visit of the tourist and the lover of nature. I remained a few months at Geneva, Cayuga County, whence I removed to Auburn, in the same county, where I continued to reside till I ceased to be a Universalist minister. At Auburn, I preached to the Universalist Society in that place, and edited *The Gospel Advocate and Impartial Investigator*, a semi-monthly periodical which, at the time of its coming under my control, was the most widely circulated and the most influential periodical in this country devoted to the interests of Universalism, though it had gained its circulation and influence less by its

advocacy of Universalism, than by its opposition to the movements of the Presbyterian and other Evangelical sects to stop the Sunday mails, to control the politics, and to wield the social influence of the country,—what the same sects are still attempting by means of their Young Men's Christian Associations, and kindred societies. The periodical had been started at Buffalo by the Rev. Thomas Gross, who had been a Congregational minister in one of the Eastern States, but, being obliged to leave his parish, had turned Universalist, and by the Rev. Linus S. Everett, originally, I believe, a house and sign-painter, a man of little learning, but a good deal of mother-wit. He had not a pleasant expression, but otherwise he was a fine-looking man, had a popular address, and engaging manners. He had little religious belief, and not much moral principle, but he was a philanthropist, and talked well.

The periodical had been removed by Mr. Everett to Auburn, and the proprietorship had been disposed of to Ulysses F. Doubleday, printer and bookseller, proprietor and editor of the *Cayuga Patriot*, and subsequently a member of Congress, a man of a strong mind, and an able writer. He was a Universalist when I knew him, but he afterwards became, I heard, a Calvinistic Baptist. I had written a good deal for the periodical while at Ithaca, had charge of it during the absence of its editor, and had acquired through its pages considerable reputation as a writer, and when Mr. Everett removed, its editorship was transferred to me. I conducted it for a year, but with more credit to my free, bold, and crude thinking, than to my piety or orthodoxy even as a Universalist In it is a confused medley of thoughts, and the germs of nearly all I subsequently held or published till my conversion to the Catholic Church.

In the commencement of my career as a Universalist, I did my best to smother my doubts as to revelation, and to defend Universalism as a Scriptural doctrine. But I succeeded only indifferently. I had made up my mind that endless vindictive punishment was contrary to reason, and incompatible with the love and goodness of God; but when I became forced to study the Scriptures more attentively, in order to defend Universalism against the objections I had to meet, I became satisfied that they did not teach the final salvation of all men, if literally interpreted, and that I must either reject them as authority for reason, or else accept the doctrine of endless punishment.

The answers we gave to the texts cited against us could not stand the test of honest criticism, and those we adduced in our favor were more specious than conclusive. Either, then, since the doctrine of endless punishment is contrary to reason, I must give up reason, and then have no reason for accepting the Scriptures at all, and no means of determining their sense; or I must make reason the judge not only of the meaning of Scripture, but of the truth or falsity of that meaning. I chose, as was reasonable in my position, the latter alternative, and rejected the authority of the Scriptures.

For a time, indeed, I tried to persuade myself that I could reject the Scriptures as authoritative, and yet concede their authenticity and divine inspiration. But it would not do. If the Bible is God's word, it is authoritative, not only because God has the right to command us as our sovereign Lord and proprietor, but because, since he can neither deceive nor be deceived, his word is the highest conceivable evidence of truth. God is the supreme reason; and if we have full evidence that what we take to be his word really is his word, it is final, and an infallible test of what is or is not reasonable. In cases of apparent conflict between it and the teachings of reason, I must conclude, not that it is wrong, but that I have misinterpreted reason, and assumed that reason teaches what in reality it does not. If I understood reason better, I should perceive no discrepancy, because God can never teach us one thing in his word, and a contradictory thing through our natural reason. What he tells us in his word may be above reason, but cannot be against it.

I saw this clearly enough. But my Protestantism was in my way. Before I can thus surrender my reason to the Bible, and conclude the reasonableness of what it teaches, or its accordance with reason where I do not see that accordance or that reasonableness, I must have infallible authority for asserting that the Bible is the word of God, and for determining its true sense; for the Bible can bind me only inasmuch as it is the word of God, and it is the word of God only in its true sense,—the sense intended by the Holy Ghost. But I have not in either case this infallible authority. The Catholic Church, indeed, pretends to have received it, but that church is out of the question. I have only my reason with which to determine that the Bible is God's word, or with which to determine its true meaning.

Here is my difficulty. Reason is no more infallible in settling these two points, than it is in settling the point as to what is or is not unreasonable; and as without reason I can neither determine that the Bible is inspired or what is its sense, I cannot surrender my reason to it in cases where it appears to me unreasonable. I may believe on competent authority that a doctrine is reasonable, although I do not perceive its reasonableness; but I cannot, if I try, believe what appears to me unreasonable, on the authority of reason alone. To say you believe a thing unreasonable is to say that you do not believe it, and that you reject it. Belief always is and must be a reasonable act; in it reason assents, mediately or immediately, to the proposition that it is true. Where that assent is wanting belief cannot be predicated. It is a contradiction in terms to say that you believe what you hold to be unreasonable. I cannot, on the authority of Scripture, established only by reason, believe what appears to me unreasonable. Whoever knows any thing of the operations of the mind knows that it is so. The Bible, then, without an infallible authority to assert it and deduce its sense, can never be authority sufficient for believing a doctrine to be reasonable, when that reasonableness is not apparent to the understanding. By rejecting the authority of the church as the witness of revelation and judge of its meaning, I found myself obliged, therefore, to reject, in turn, the authority of the Scriptures.

But reason, I soon discovered, in order to be able to judge by its own light of the truth or falsity of a revealed doctrine, must know, independently of the revelation, all that it can teach us. Revelation, then, is superfluous. I can know without it all I can know with it. God, then, cannot have made a revelation to us, for he does nothing in vain, or without a purpose. But, as the Scriptures evidently teach the unreasonable doctrine of endless punishment, they are, if believed to be given by divine inspiration, worse than useless; they are calculated to mislead, to perpetuate superstitious fear, and to prevent the world from rising to just conceptions of the love and goodness of God, and a just reliance on his providence. In the interests of truth and human happiness, then, I ought not only to reject the Scriptures, but to do all in my power to destroy belief in them as the word of God.

I had other difficulties with Universalism. The ground on which I rejected endless punishment was that all punish-

ment should be reformatory in its nature and intention. All Universalists held that vengeance, or vindictive punishment, designed to honor a broken law and vindicate an offended majesty, is incompatible with the nature of a God who is love. Love worketh no ill to his neighbor. The nature of love is to make the object beloved happy as far as in its power. God is love, his wisdom and power are unlimited. He loves all his creatures; he can make them all happy, and therefore will. He can punish no one in his wrath; he can only chastise us for our profit, "that we may be made partakers of his holiness." Then no vindictive punishment.

We all hold this doctrine. But this doctrine denies that sin is ever punished. If pain is inflicted upon a sinner, it is not to punish his sin, but to reform him. The quantity of pain must not then be measured by the quantity of sin committed. The infliction can have no reference to wrong done or guilt incurred, and its amount must be determined by the amount necessary to reform the wrong-doer. It then is not punishment at all. Its motive is not to punish, but to benefit him who suffers it, and may as well be inflicted on the innocent as on the guilty, if it will do him good, or will redound to his advantage. From pain inflicted for one's benefit it can be no advantage to save him. How, then, can I talk of a Saviour? Universalists say Jesus Christ is the Saviour of all men. But from what does he save them? From punishment, from a penalty annexed to the divine law? No, for God never annexed any penalty to the breach of his law, for he never punishes to vindicate his law. All the penalty, all the consequence of sin, is simply to be whipped till we sin no more, and from that whipping Christ saves no one. How, then, can I call him a Saviour?

He is a Saviour, we answered, in that he saves us from sinning. "Thou shalt call his name Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins." Yet he does not save us from sinning, for we go on sinning every day. But how does or can he save us from sinning? Not by infusing believing and sanctifying grace into our hearts, for the doctrine of infused grace is rejected by all Protestants, who, when they recognize grace at all as operating within us, recognize it only as a transient act of God, not as an infused habit of the soul. He can save us only by his doctrine and example. His example is for us only the example of a good man, better than that of any other, because more perfect, yet differing,

from that of others only in degree. His doctrine—who can say what it is? Can I say honestly that I know what he taught? Did he teach the endless punishment of the wicked? If so, he does not save us by his doctrine from sinning, for Universalists are agreed that the doctrine of endless punishment has an immoral tendency, inasmuch as it denies the love and goodness of God, and represents him as partial, vindictive, and unjust. Did he teach Universalism, that all men are sure of heaven, and cannot possibly miss it? Did he teach that vice has no punishment, virtue no reward; that Judas, Pilate, and Herod will receive a crown of life as well as Peter, James, and John, and a crown equally bright, unfading, eternal in the heavens? How does that doctrine save us from sinning, or tend to make us virtuous? What motive to virtue does it present; what consideration to deter from vice? Do my best, I cannot make my eternal felicity surer; do my worst, I cannot render it less sure. Why, then, shall I trouble myself about the matter? Let me eat, drink, and be merry, for to-morrow I die, and go—to heaven. Here, then, I have lost the authority of the church, the authority and inspiration of the Scriptures, even my Saviour himself, and with him the last vestige of revealed religion. Surely, I have a marvellous faculty in losing. Wonder what I have gained!

But, as the world looks upon Jesus as a Saviour, and gathers round him a multitude of superstitious notions which make men mental and moral slaves, and prevent them from asserting their freedom, their manhood, standing up and acting like men, he, so far from saving them from sinning, actually prevents them from being saved, and becomes the occasion of their moral degradation and misery. I ought, then, to war against him, and to do my best to deliver the world from its bondage to him. Thus I may myself become a saviour, and be entitled to the respect he usurps. Hence, my Universalism made me, so far as logic could go, not only a non-Christian, but an anti-Christian. This was my reasoning at the time, not merely my reasoning now.

But my troubles did not end here. In order to meet the objection that Universalism was of a licentious tendency, and opened the floodgates of iniquity, we laid particular stress on the certainty of punishment, and the impossibility of escaping it. We maintained that every one would receive according to the deeds done in the body, and even here in this world that God will by no means clear the

guilty; that, as a man sows so shall he reap, and that he must pay the debt he contracts, pay it in his own person, and "to the uttermost farthing." We were, after having said this, accustomed to turn upon our assailants, and to tell them that their doctrine of a punishment put off till after the day of judgment, and their doctrine of repentance and remission of sin, by which the vilest sinner, a hard-faced grinding Presbyterian or Congregationalist deacon, by a simple act of faith, could escape his just deserts, and take his rank in heaven as a saint of the first water, might with far more justice be charged with an immoral and licentious tendency. But this doctrine, if it meant any thing, denied all pardon, all forgiveness, all mercy, all compassion on the part of God, all interposition on his part in favor of the transgressor. God leaves the sinner to the mercy of the order he has established. He has made the world, adjusted its parts, impressed on it its laws, given it a jog, and bid it go ahead and take care of itself. Then I lose my Father in heaven, for God is only my creator, and is no more my father than he is the father of the reed or the oak. I lose Providence, and am reduced to an inflexible and inexorable nature. Prayer, repentance, devotion, entreaty, can avail me nothing. God has intrenched himself behind the natural laws, and cannot hear me, will not interpose to help me. With this went even natural religion.

But, as God inflicts pain only for the sake of reformation, as he never punishes sin or rewards virtue, all idea of moral accountability must be abandoned. God will never bring us into judgment for our conduct. Then there is no power above us to defend oppressed innocence, and to vindicate the majesty of right. Then, what is the criterion of right and wrong? Both must be alike pleasing to God; and if both are alike pleasing to him, if he regards with equal complacency the sinner and the saint, what is the radical difference between them? None that I can see. God wills our happiness: then what makes us happy must be regarded as good, and what makes us miserable must be regarded as evil. An action is virtuous, then, because it promotes our happiness, produces pleasurable emotions in ourselves or in others; and vice is that which does not promote our happiness, which causes painful emotions in us or in others. Virtue is virtue because it promotes happiness; and vice is vice because it brings misery. Then no objective distinction between virtue and vice, between good and evil. Here, said I, is the very foundation of morality undermined.

God governs the world, I said, only by general laws which he has impressed on it in creating it, and with the natural operation of these he never interferes. These laws admit the existence of evil. The world is full of suffering; man preys upon man, and the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain. What is to hinder it from being always so? What is to put an end to evil, to pain and suffering? What is to insure the triumph of good? No new law can be introduced, no new power can be developed. What, then, is to assure us that evil will ever be less? The goodness of God, you tell me. But how am I to be assured that God is good? I can prove his goodness only from nature, and in nature the evil seems to surpass the good. Here Universalism, said I, runs itself out, and renders doubtful even its own premises.

It must not be supposed that I accepted all these frightful conclusions. They followed logically from my premises, and logically I was obliged to accept them; yet my good sense and my better feelings rebelled against them. My mind could neither reject nor accept them. It was in doubt: it was unsettled, uncertain, in a snarl, and I could see no wiser course to pursue than to dismiss the whole subject from my thoughts. I know nothing, I said, and can know nothing on the subject, and let me not attempt to decide any thing respecting it one way or the other. I may trust my senses, and believe in the world of sensible phenomena. I will henceforth confine myself to that, and leave alone all metaphysical or theological speculations, and neither assert nor deny the invisible and the spiritual. Thus I had, following reason, lost the Bible, lost my Saviour, lost Providence, lost reason itself, and had left me only my five senses, and what could fall under their observation: that is, reduced myself to a mere animal.

But, with these doubts hanging over me, it was clear that I could not, as an honest man, present myself before the public as a Christian minister. It is true, I did not write or preach differently from what I thought and felt: nobody could really be deceived as to the state of my mind. Many of my brother ministers knew my doubts. They blamed me, it is true, not for entertaining them, but for not keeping them to myself. Some of them, I knew from their confidential communications, believed no more than I did; and my conviction at the time was, that Universalists generally had no belief in revelation, and were really deists or sceptics,

and professed to be Christians only because they could combat all religion more successfully under a nominally Christian banner, than under the banner of open, avowed infidelity. In this, I am inclined to believe, I did them injustice. I gave them credit for being deeper thinkers and better logicians than they were. Few men ever reason out their own systems, or compare all the parts of the system they embrace with one another. I did not always do this myself. Universalists did not generally think beyond the few points brought into discussion between them and the so-called Orthodox, and never troubled themselves to inquire whether the ground on which they defended their Universalism could be assumed without involving a denial of Christianity, or not.

But, although I was beginning to acquire a prominent position in the denomination, I felt that I ought to leave it. I could not consent to profess what I did not honestly believe; and my irritation at myself for my want of manliness and strict honesty in continuing to preach after I had ceased to believe, increased my doubts, and made me think I doubted even more than I really did. The moment I broke off my connection with the Universalists, and took my position openly and above-board, not as a disbeliever, but as an unbeliever, I felt restored to my manhood—I felt like a new man. My irritation ceased, and almost instantly the tone of my feelings changed towards Christianity. I was no longer obliged to profess, or to seem to profess, more than I believed; and from that moment my mind began to recover its balance, and the most anti-Christian period of my life was the last two years that I was a Universalist preacher.

CHAPTER V.—BECOME A WORLD-REFORMER.

It was never in my nature, any more than it is in that of the human race, to take up with a purely negative system. My craving to believe was always strong, and it never was my misfortune to be of a sceptical turn of mind. But, if I craved something to believe, it was never for the sake of believing. I wanted the truth, would labor for it, harder than most men perhaps, but never to stop with its mere apprehension or barren contemplation. My disposition was practical rather than speculative, or even meditative, like that of the majority of my country-men. I sought the truth in order to know what I ought to do, and as the means

of realizing some moral or practical end. I wanted it that I might use it.

While my Universalism was escaping me, I had been engaged in acquiring a positive belief of another sort. My early religious belief, vague as it was, gave me an end to labor for,—that of getting religion, and preparing myself, with God's grace, for eternal happiness in heaven. Even the Assembly's catechism had taught me that "the chief end of man is to glorify God, and enjoy him forever." I had in my childhood no difficulty as to the end; my difficulty was only as to the means of gaining it. Universalism deprived me of that end, as an end to live and labor for, by teaching me that it was just as certain without as with my personal exertions. It left my life here very nearly purposeless. The most I had to do was to combat Orthodoxy, and spread Universalism,—a very meagre work; for it effected nothing one way or another in relation to the final result. Why should I do it? And when I have done it, and got all the world to believe Universalism, what will remain for me or others to do? But some work I must have, something to do, to prevent my activity from recoiling upon itself; and as Universalism had made me doubt the utility of all labors for another world, I was forced to look for a work to be done for this world. I had made nothing of my religious speculations, nothing of my inquiries as to the invisible and the heavenly, and reason counselled me, obliged me to leave them, to drop from the clouds, take my stand on the solid earth, and devote myself to the material order, to the virtue and happiness of mankind in this earthly life. Certainly this did not perfectly satisfy me in the beginning; but it seemed the only alternative that was left me. I had no choice in the matter. With the fear of hell, the hope of heaven had escaped; and, as the other world disappeared from my view, nothing but this world did or could remain.

About the time of my becoming a Universalist minister, Robert Owen, from New Lanark, Scotland, came to this country for the purpose of establishing a community, and to commence the realization of his plans of world-reform. Mr. Owen was a Welshman by birth, and bred a cotton-spinner. He was engaged, while still a young man, to take charge of the extensive cotton mills at New Lanark, in Scotland, owned by a Mr. Dale, whose daughter he subsequently married. Through this marriage he became part, and at length, if I

am not mistaken, sole proprietor of the mills, which made him a rich man. While acting as manager, more especially as part or sole proprietor, he introduced several wise and judicious arrangements, which added much to the cleanliness, decorum, thrift, and physical comfort of the workmen. From the success of his experiments at New Lanark, and from the manifest improvement he had been able to introduce in the condition of the population employed in the mills, or under his care and supervision, he concluded that he had discovered the secret of so organizing mankind as to cure all individual and social evils, and to make all men rich, virtuous, and happy.

Mr. Owen was a man of much simplicity and benevolence of character. He knew little of Christianity, and believed less, but he was philanthropic, and was ready to make very heavy sacrifices for the happiness of mankind, or, rather, for realizing his plans for making them happy. He drew up an outline of his plan, and presented it to the principal crowned heads, ministers, statesmen, and literary and scientific men of Europe; but not meeting with the degree of encouragement he looked for, and doubting whether the Old World was the place for trying his experiment, he resolved on coming to the United States,—the best place in the world for visionaries to recover their wits, and to find their fanciful schemes explode. He came when John Quincy Adams was President, though I do not now recall the precise date, and laid his plans before Mr. Adams, the congress, and the people of the United States. His respectability as a man, his sincerity, his apparent benevolence, and his practical sagacity in particulars, gained him respectful treatment and a candid hearing. Many listened with favor, and a few with enthusiasm. He soon succeeded in gaining a number of followers; and, elated, he purchased a settlement called Harmony, in Posey County, Indiana, named it New Harmony, and established there, with a band of enthusiasts and adventurers, some from Europe, some from the United States, a provisional community, preparatory to the complete introduction of his plan of community life, and universal world-reform.

Mr. Owen's great principle or maxim was, that man is passive, not active in the formation of his character; that his character is formed not by him, but for him, by education, or the circumstances in which he is born, grows up, and lives. Since man is passive in the formation of his

character, in the hands of circumstances like clay in the hands of the potter, it is practicable, by a skilful arrangement of circumstances, or by a proper arrangement of the external influences brought to bear on him, to mould his character into that of the most consummate wisdom and the most heroic virtue. Hitherto all had gone wrong; circumstances had been arranged to corrupt and debase man's character. Man has thus far been cursed with a trinity of evils: property, marriage, and religion. Abolish these, bring men and women to live together in communities of from one to two thousand in each, insure them to live in parallelograms, with all things in common in perfect equality, with the circumstances bearing equally upon all and each, and you will form their characters to virtue, and provide for the proper education of their offspring. There will then be no poverty, no inequality, no want, no envy, no discontent, no disease, no vice, no crime, but all will be peace, love, mutual good-will, kindness, virtue, harmony, bliss. The dream was not without its charm. But the poor man was not destined to realize it. His Harmony after a few months proved to be no harmony at all, but harsh discord, rather. He had taken the precaution to keep the property he invested in his establishment in his own name. His disciples murmured at this, as an inconsistency on his part, though they were living at his expense, and thought he ought to carry out his principles and abolish private property at once, and bestow all he called his own on the community, to be held in common by its members. They succeeded, I believe, in cozening him out of a considerable sum, involving him in pecuniary embarrassment, and forcing him to sell his New Lanark property. They then separated, and several of them went through the country abusing him for his want of consistency, and his unwillingness to make greater sacrifices for their benefit.

The plan was silly enough, and its success would have made men only well-trained and well-fed animals, and I will say this for myself that I never fully adopted it. I had some trouble in believing that man was perfectly passive in the formation of his character; and if he was, I could not see how the circumstances were to be controlled by him, and be brought to bear equally upon all and upon each. If he was to have no want, I was puzzled to understand what was to stimulate him to exertion; and if he made no exertion, I could not understand how he was to become intellectually

great, or to produce the wherewith to provide for his animal wants. But Mr. Owen's discourses, publications, and movements drew my attention to the social evils which exist in every land, to the inequalities which obtain even in our own country, where political equality is secured by law, and to the question of reorganizing society and creating a paradise on earth. My sympathies were enlisted, I became what is now called a socialist, and found for many years a vent for my activity in devising, supporting, refuting, and rejecting theories and plans of world-reform.

Failing to find an authority competent to teach me the true sense of a supernatural revelation, I had, step by step, rejected all such revelation, and brought myself back to simple nature, to the world of the senses, and to this sublunary life. I neither asserted nor denied the existence of God. I neither believed nor disbelieved in a life after death. The position I took was: These are matters of which I know nothing, of which I can know nothing, and therefore are matters of which I will endeavor not to think. Of this world of the senses I do and may know something. Here is a work to be done, here is the scene of my labors, and here I will endeavor to love mankind and make them happy. I had, indeed, a very limited creed, but, nevertheless, I had one, which I firmly held. Half in mockery, but at bottom in sober earnest, I drew up and published it such as it was, just before leaving Universalism. I must be permitted to transcribe it.

MY CREED.

"Almost every man has a creed. There are few who do not worship their creed with more devotion than they do their God, and labor a thousand times harder to support it than they do the truth. Now, I do not like to be singular, and I know not why I may not have a creed as well as other folk. But, if I publish my creed, consistency may require me to defend it; and when I have once enlisted self-love in its defence, I may become blind to the truth, and choose rather to abide by my first decision than to admit that I have once decided wrong. Yet a creed I must and will have, and my readers shall know what it is.

"My creed shall consist of *five* points" (in allusion to the five points of Calvinism, defined by the Synod of Dort), "and shall embrace all the essentials of true religion. Furthermore, I wish to premise that my creed was not adopted

merely to-day; it has been cordially embraced, and of its correctness I have had no doubts for at least nine months. . . . I would allege, in behalf of my creed, that it is plain, easy to be understood, and withal involves no mystery. The pious, however, from this circumstance may be led to doubt its *divine* origin, and infidels may like it so well that I shall be shut out from the church. But I will state it, though I must still further allege that I believe it to be based on eternal truth, and it is calculated, if obeyed, to harmonize this world, and to enable the vast family of man to live forever under the smiles of fraternal affection. But for the creed:—

"Art. I. I believe that every individual of the human family should be *honest.*

"Art. II. I believe that every one should be benevolent and kind to all.

"Art. III. I believe that every one should use his best endeavors to procure food, clothing, and shelter for himself, and labor to enable all others to procure the same for themselves to the full extent of his ability.

"Art. IV. I believe every one should cultivate his mental powers, that he may open to himself new sources of enjoyment, and also be enabled to aid his brethren in their attempts to improve the condition of the human race, and to increase the sum of human happiness.

"Art. V. I believe that, if all mankind act on these principles, they serve God all they can serve him; that he who has this faith and conforms the nearest unto what it enjoins, is the most acceptable unto God." *

It is easy to see from this creed, so called in mockery, that I rejected heaven for earth, and God for man, eternity for time, as the end for which I was to live and labor. The first article indicates my impression that people generally, whatever their pretences, did not seriously believe in a supernatural revelation. I had, too, been rendered impatient by the lectures I received from various quarters on my imprudence in not concealing my doubts. I disliked seeming to be what I was not, or professing to believe what I did not believe. I could see no merit in professing to be a Christian, when I knew I was no Christian. I wanted to appear fighting under my own colors, to speak out my honest thought, and

**Gospel Advocate and Impartial Investigator,* June 27, 1829.

let it go for what it was worth. Yet I was met with remonstrance. I was not blamed for my thought, but for telling it; and blamed for telling it, not on the ground that it was false, but on the ground that it was bad policy to tell it. I hated what is called policy then, and I have no great fondness for it even yet. A man's life-blood is frozen in its current, his intellect deadened, and his very soul annihilated by the everlasting dinging into his ears by the wise and prudent, more properly the timid and selfish, of the admonition to be politic, to take care not to compromise one's cause or one's friends. My soul revolted, and revolts even to-day, at this admonition. Almost the only blunders I ever committed in my life were committed when I studied to be politic, and prided myself on my diplomacy.

Prudence is a virtue, and rashness is a sin, but my own reason and experience have taught me that truth is a far more trustworthy support than the best-devised scheme of human policy possible. Honesty is the best policy. Be honest with thyself, be honest with all the world, be true to thy convictions, be faithful to what truth thou hast, be it ever so little, and never dream of supplying its defect by thy astuteness or craft. Certainly be so, if thou believest in a God who is truth itself, and with whom to lie is impossible. Fear not for thy cause, if thou believest it his cause, for it must stand and prosper in his wisdom and power, not in thy human sagacity, thy human prudence, thy human policy. Throw thyself heart and soul on his truth, it will sustain thee; if not, be contented to fail. It is comparatively easy to know what is true, what is virtuous; but what, aside from fidelity to truth and virtue, is wise policy, or genuine prudence, surpasses the wit of men to say. Never yet has a great saint arisen without seeming, to even great and good men in church or state as well as to the wise and prudent men of the world, terribly rash, shockingly imprudent. No one can be a man, and do a man's work, unless he is sincere, unless he is in earnest, terribly in earnest, throwing his whole heart and soul into his work; and whoever does so, may depend upon it that the chief men of his sect, his party, or his school, if not of his church, will be alarmed at his conduct, will accuse him of being ultra, of going too far, of endangering every thing by his rashness, his want of prudence, of policy. I am no saint, never was, and never shall be a saint. I am not, and never shall be, a great man; but I always had, and I trust I always shall have, the honor

of being regarded by my friends and associates as impolitic, as rash, imprudent, and impracticable. I was and am, in my natural disposition, frank, truthful, straightforward, and earnest; and therefore have had, and, I doubt not, shall carry to the grave with me, the reputation of being reckless, ultra, a well-meaning man, perhaps an able man, but so fond of paradoxes and extremes, that he cannot be relied on, and more likely to injure than serve the cause he espouses. So, wise and prudent men shake their heads when my name is mentioned, and disclaim all solidarity with me.

I must be pardoned this burst of indignation,—an indignation which dictated the first article of my creed of 1829, and which is stronger than I wish it in 1857. I have suffered so much from the *prudence* of associates, have received so many admonitions in relation to my alleged ultraisms and tendency to run to extremes, so many cautions to be moderate, to be prudent, to be politic, and the like, that I am a little sore on the point, and cannot keep as cool on the subject as becomes a man of my age, gravity, and experience. Yet it is not wholly a personal matter with me. I am past my prime of life, and shall soon be beyond the reach of any personal annoyance I may feel. But I would leave my protest against this tendency on the part of the worshippers of routine to damp the courage and to stifle the energy of young and ardent spirits who come forward to devote themselves to the cause of truth and virtue. If what a man says is true, and is evidently said with an honest intention, do not decry him, do not disown him, do not beat the life out of him by lectures on prudence; stand by him, and bear with him the odium he may incur by telling the truth, encourage him by your respect for his honesty and candor, and shelter him, as far as in your power, from the reproaches of weak and timid brethren; for be assured we live in an age and country where honesty and candor, fidelity to one's honest convictions, and moral courage in avowing them, are not virtues likely to become excessive. Fidelity to what one believes to be true, moral courage in adhering to our convictions before the world, is the greatest want of our times. The age lacks above all things sincerity, earnestness. Give us back these, give us back the old-fashioned loyalty of heart, and we shall not need to labor long to bring the age to see, own, and obey the truth. The subjective heresy of the age is a far greater obstacle to its conversion than its objective errors. What men most lack is principle, is the

feeling that they should be true to the right; and that to be manly, is to be ready to follow the truth under whatever guise it may come, to whatever it may lead, to the loss of reputation, to poverty, to beggary, to the dungeon or the scaffold, to the stake or exile. I have had my faults, great and grievous faults, as well as others, but I have never had that of disloyalty to principle, or of fearing to own my honest convictions, however unpopular they might be, or however absurd or dangerous the public might regard them. Give me rather the open, honest unbeliever, who pretends to believe nothing more than he really does believe, than your sleek, canting hypocrite, who rolls up his eyes in holy horror of unbelief, and makes a parade of his orthodoxy, when he believes not a word in the Gospel, and has a heart which is a cage of unclean beasts, out of which more devils need to be cast than were cast out of the Magdalen. The former may never see God, but the latter deserves the lowest place in hell. There is hope of the conversion of a nation of unbelievers; of the conversion of a nation of hypocrites none. Sincerity in error is respectable; insincerity in the truth is of all things the most reprehensible, for it proves the heart is wholly false, a mass of corruption, in which even divine grace can find, I was about to say, nothing to work upon, certainly nothing likely to concur with it.

If my conscience would have let me pretend to be a Christian, after it became clear I was no Christian believer; if I could, without suffering its reproaches, have continued to profess myself a Universalist, after I had ceased to believe in revelation, though writing or preaching nothing which I did not really believe, I doubt if the grace of God would ever have rescued me from my errors; and I must think it was his grace that would not suffer me to do so. My honest avowal of unbelief was, under the circumstances, a step that brought me nearer the kingdom of God. I believe that the mass of my countrymen will make little advance towards the Gospel till they come back to honest nature, and consent to own to themselves and to the world what they really are. It is necessary, first of all, to make away with all shams,—to use one of Carlyle's terms,—to get rid of all illusions, and to believe a lie is a lie, and that no lie shall stand. We live in an age of shams, of illusions; and the saddest thing of all is that, while we have no faith in reality, we believe in shams, we trust illusions, and say, These be thy gods, O Israel! that have brought thee up out of the land of Egypt.

If we have not advanced to faith in the Gospel, let us return to simple nature, and have at least the natural order, which, after all, is real, on which to plant our feet.

The end of man, as disclosed by "my creed" of 1829, is obviously an earthly end, to be attained in this life. Man was not made for God, and destined to find his beatitude in the possession of God, his supreme good, the supreme good itself. His end was happiness, not happiness in God, but in the possession of the good things of this world. Our Lord had said: "Be not anxious as to what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink, or wherewithal ye shall be clothed, for after all these things do the heathen seek." I gave him a flat denial, and said: Be anxious, labor especially for these things, first for yourselves, then for others. Enlarging, however, my views a little, I said: Man's end for which he is to labor, is the well-being and happiness of mankind in this world—is to develop man's whole nature, and so to organize society and government as to secure all men a paradise on the earth. This view of the end to labor for, I held steadily and without wavering from 1828 till 1842, when I began to find myself tending unconsciously toward the Catholic Church. The various systems I embraced or defended, whether social or political, ethical or æsthetical, philosophical or theological, were all subordinated to this end, as means by which man's earthly condition was to be meliorated. I sought truth, I sought knowledge, I sought virtue for no other end, and it was not in seeking to save my soul, to please God, or to have the true religion, that I was led to the Catholic Church, but to obtain the means of gaining the earthly happiness of mankind. My end was man's earthly happiness, and my creed was progress. In regard to neither did I change or swerve in the least, till the truth of the Catholic Church was forced upon my mind and my heart. During the period of fourteen years, for the greater part of which I was accused of changing at least once every three months, I never changed once in my principles or my purposes, and all I did change were my tools, my instruments, or my modes of operation.

In renouncing Universalism, which with me was only a stage in my transition from the religion of my childhood to socialism, I had renounced all fear and all hope in regard to another world; and though subsequently, as a Unitarian, I held to a future existence, it was merely a continuation of our natural life, a natural immortality, which did not include the resurrection of the flesh, or rewards and punishments in

a Christian sense. I felt easy in regard to the future, and was in the habit of maintaining that the best way to secure a heaven hereafter is to create a heaven for mankind in this world. For years I held this maxim, and never troubled myself at all in regard to what might be my fate or that of others after death. I had a firm belief in progress, full confidence in philosophy, and a strong desire to contribute to the welfare of my fellow-men, to reform the world, and create an earthly paradise for the human race; but I had very little thought or sense of my duty to God, and no serious care for any thing beyond the service of my neighbor in relation to this life. I recognized God, but only in man, and I held that he exists for us only in human nature.

For years I went no further in my thoughts, and thirsted for nothing higher or broader. I had schooled my feelings and my imagination to my narrow carnal-Judaism, and experienced nothing of that craving for an unseen and spiritual good, that secret longing for God and religion, of which so much use is made in our arguments against unbelievers. I felt none of that trouble which I felt formerly when I found my childhood's belief escaping me. I am convinced by my own experience that our philanthropists and world-reformers may become so engrossed in their plans that they do not experience that aching void within, that emptiness of all created things, which we sometimes imagine. Their philanthropy is a religion unto them. Even failures do not at once discourage them, for they find their relief in their doctrine of progress. It is idle to tell them that the good they seek is bounded, and that the soul craves an unbounded good; for, holding to progress, to the indefinite perfectibility of man, they are unable to assign any limits to the good to which they are wedded; and as progress implies imperfection, they have a ready excuse for their failures. We have failed to-day, but we shall succeed to-morrow. I was mistaken, my experiment was not successful, but I shall do better next time. Or, if I die without succeeding, the human race is progressive, each new generation is wiser than the last, and the generation coming after me will succeed, and my labors, my experiments, my failures even, will perhaps contribute to its success. So they will not be in vain. Individuals die, but the race survives, is immortal. Thus hope revives from failure; and the individual consoles himself with the belief that what he cannot accomplish, the race in its march through the ages will

effect, and his labors meet their reward in the increased virtue and happiness of mankind.

We cannot reach the socialist, who has made a religion of his socialism, by appeals to his love of happiness, or to the failures of his undertakings. I would that I could feel the fervor, the enthusiasm, in the cause of the truth, which at one period I felt in the cause of socialism. The fact is, the socialist is not all wrong. You may declaim against him as much as you please, but it will be none the less true that he is often governed by noble instincts, by generous sentiments, which Christianity does not disown, but accepts and consecrates. He has also certain aspects even of Christian truth, or aspects of truth which, without the Christian revelation and the operations of Christian charity, he never would have beheld. In those aspects of truth which he has, and to which he is devoted, we must take our point of departure in leading him to renounce his errors.

CHAPTER VI.—METHODS OF WORLD-REFORM.

I had fixed the end for which I was to labor,—the creation of an earthly paradise; but the means of gaining it were not well determined. My own mind was very nearly balanced between two contradictory theories: the theory of individualism, and that of communism. I had read, had, in fact, studied with great assiduity, one of the most remarkable works in our language, *An Enquiry concerning the Principles of Political Justice*, if I recollect the title aright, by William Godwin, originally a Calvinistic dissenting minister, at Stowmarket, England, whence, in 1787, he removed to London, where he devoted himself to literature. He was the author of *Caleb Williams*, *St. Leon*, *Fleetwood*, *Mandeville*, *Cloudsley*, a work on *Population* in reply to Malthus, *A History of the Commonwealth of England*, *The Life and Times of Chaucer*, and several other works, the titles of which I forget. He married, in 1797, Mary Wollstonecraft, a writer of some distinction, best known as the author of a work entitled, *Rights of Woman*, a pendant to Paine's *Rights of Man*, and which may be regarded as the Bible of our Women's Rights party. She was the mother of Mary Godwin, who wrote *Frankenstein*, a most fearful story, fitted to give one the nightmare for three weeks after reading it; and who, after his divorce from his wife, was regarded as married to the poet Shelley. Godwin's novels

were much read in their day, and it is easy to trace their influence in the productions of Charles Brockden Brown, one of our earliest American novelists, who merits a higher rank in American literature than has been commonly assigned him. Sir Edward Bulwer Lytton owes, in his earlier novels, much to those of Godwin, and *Caleb Williams* and *St. Leon* are still read. As a writer, for calmness and strength, for repose and energy combined, Godwin has scarcely a rival in the English language; and his style deserves to be studied by every one who would master the purity, elegance, and force of our mother-tongue. I know no other English writer who, unmoved himself, so powerfully moves his readers; and he is almost the only English writer, since Burke's unhappy influence on the language, who has written truly classical English, or our language according to its real genius.

The work on Political Justice was first published in 1792, and was republished in a second edition, much modified from the first, in 1794. My edition was the second. I have it not now, and have not seen it these twenty years, but I remember its contents very distinctly. It was inspired by the enthusiasm created by the French Revolution of 1789 in a large class of the civilized world, and contains nearly all the false and dangerous principles of that revolution, systematically arranged, developed, and pushed to their last consequences with a merciless logic, and a chasteness, vigor, grace, and elegance of language, which I have never seen surpassed. I had read this book when quite a lad, but without understanding it; and I had read it again as a Universalist, and appropriated many of its ideas. I now read it still again as a socialist, and I think it has had more influence on my mind than any other book, except the Scriptures, I have ever read. There is scarcely a modern error that it does not contain; and he who has mastered it, may regard himself as in possession of nearly every error the human mind is capable of inventing. It denies as unjust all punishment, except restraint from actual violence, and consequently all capital punishment, and all penitentiaries. The author contends that the only law is justice, and justice requires us to treat every man according to his intrinsic worth, although he forgets to tell us how we are to discover it; and therefore, that if my neighbor has more intrinsic worth than I, I am to love him more, if less, I am to love him less, than myself. If his father, mother, sister, brother, wife, or child, is more worthy than mine, then am I to love

them more than mine; if mine are the more worthy, then am I to love mine the most. If a rude man attacks me and threatens my life, I am to consider whether his life or mine, upon the whole, is the more worthy; if mine, then I am to defend my life at the expense of his, if necessary; if his, then I am to offer him no resistance, but let him kill me, if he chooses. Marriage, by which two persons pledge themselves to love each other exclusively until death separates them, is repugnant to justice, for it may happen that neither is the most worthy; or if, at the time of marriage, they be so, one or the other, or both, may cease to be so, long before the death of either. There is no magic in that pronoun *my*, by which I am justified in loving *my* wife, because she is mine. If my neighbor's wife is more worthy than mine, I am bound to love her the most. I am to love the most worthy, and all are bound in like manner to love her most who is really the most worthy of all. It would happen, then, that all would be bound to love the most one and the same woman. But might not this create rivalries, jealousies, &c? No, for we could all enjoy her conversation, and any thing more could be easily enough arranged. The author forgot, and it did not occur to me to ask, how all the men of the world were to find out what particular woman among all living women is the most worthy, or how, in case she is found out, she is to entertain them all with her conversation. Women have great facility in the use of the tongue, but it would be somewhat difficult for one woman to converse with a hundred millions of men.

Godwin did not propose precisely to abolish property, but he laid down the principle, that justice declares the property belongs to him who most needs it. Justice is reciprocal. What it is just for me to give another, he has a right to demand. If my neighbor needs what is in my possession, or some portion of it, more than I do, he has the right to take it without asking my leave. This doctrine rather pleased me, for I had less than my share, and therefore more to gain than to lose by it. In the name of justice the author denied all schools, especially public schools, for they all impose, in some form, the opinions of the masters, or, through them, of the parents and guardians, on their pupils. This is contrary to justice. What right have I to impose my opinion on another, or to take measures to bring up my child or another's in my opinions, religious, political, or moral? Thought is that which is most essentially the man, and there-

fore that in him which should be freest. We may urge the man or the child to think, but must never tell either what he ought to think. This seemed to me so reasonable and just,—if the rule of private judgment be adopted,—that so long as I remained a Protestant I took good care never to give my own children any religious instruction. Parents, Godwin maintained, have no more right to control the thoughts or the opinions of their own children, than they have the children of others. How he managed with his own daughter Mary I know not. He was not married when he wrote his book.

On the same principle that he destroys the family, and all family affections as such, Godwin destroys patriotism and the nation. Why should I love my country more than another? Why am I to love any thing because it is mine? Why am I to prefer my countryman to a foreigner? What right have I to regard any man as a foreigner? If my country is in the right, I may indeed support her, not because she is mine, but because she is in the right. But if in the wrong, I may neither defend her, nor wish her defended. Justice requires me to wish her defeat. On this doctrine, distinct nations cannot exist, and the author contends that they ought not to exist. Justice breaks down and obliterates all national distinctions; and thus at once abolishes all national rivalries and jealousies, and all international wars, by removing their causes. The author, also, rejects all government. All men are equal before the law of justice, and no man has the right to govern another. For the same reason no number of men, not even the majority, have any right to make their will or their reason prevail as law. Each man has the sovereignity of himself. All government, therefore, whether monarchical, aristocratical, democratical, or mixed, is founded in injustice, is a usurpation, a tyranny, and without authority.

These principles involve complete individualism, and leave every man free to do what seems right in his own eyes. The plain, old-fashioned reader, unacquainted with world-reforms, naturally wonders how it is that a man of the ability and education of William Godwin, a man of a sharp intellect, and some knowledge of human nature, could ever have fancied that mankind could attempt to carry such principles into practice, without falling into anarchy and a worse than the savage state. It is because he does not know all the resources of world-reformers. He takes their plan as some-

thing to be adopted by mankind as they are, as a piece of new cloth to be sewn on to an old garment, and sees at once that they would take from the old, and the rent be made worse. But they propose an entire new garment, in fact, a recasting of the essential nature of man, and they intend to introduce all the changes necessary to the successful working of their schemes. According to Godwin, man has no innate instincts, or natural tendencies in the way of the reformer, no stubborn natural character that persists through all the modifications introduced by education or moral and intellectual culture. All the vices of individual character, and all the evils of society, whence man has become the greatest plague and tormentor of his kind, come from without, not from within, and are due to civil government. Abolish civil government, recognize natural justice as the only law of the race, and leave the law to execute itself, and you will remove all evils, individual and social. Leave men to reason, confide in reason, and never attempt to give reason the aid of physical force, or think of correcting the mind by inflicting pain on the body. Men, freed from all unjust restraint, from all vexatious interference of authority, finding their reason respected and their just rights allowed, will have no temptation to rebel, no provocation to encroach on any one's rights, and will of themselves fall into their proper places, and observe with fidelity all the laws of justice. As the experiment has never been tried, it is not easy to prove the contrary; and if you adopt the doctrine of the inherent integrity of nature, and the indefinite perfectibility of man, you cannot deny that the scheme has, on one side at least, a certain degree of plausibility. There is no doubt that the author is right in denying the justice of all government resting on purely human authority; and I have never been able to understand how they who deny that, though governments are constituted by men, they derive their authority to govern immediately from God, can deny Godwin's doctrine, that all governments are founded in injustice. There is just as little doubt that many of the depravities of individual character, and many of the evils of society, originate in the effort to govern men by brute force. Princes should be shepherds of the people, not dominators.

Even the absurdest and most mischievous of Godwin's principles have a certain reflection of Christian truth. His doctrine, that we should love the most worthy, irrespective of their personal relation to us, is true in the abstract; and

hence we are to forsake father and mother, wife and children, houses and lands, and even give up our own life for our Lord, for God, the infinitely worthy. In a certain sense, the proprietor is only a steward, and the surplus of his property belongs to the poor; but Christianity makes its distribution an act of charity, not of justice. Marriage, in the Christian sense, is really practicable with the majority of the non-laboring classes only by the grace of the sacrament. For men and women in easy circumstances, who are not Christians, but abandoned to simple unassisted nature, it is a burden too great to be borne, as the experience of all ages sufficiently proves. Almighty God, under the old law, dispensed the Jews from many of its rigors; and the Protestant reformers, denying marriage to be a sacrament, authorized divorce from the bond of matrimony, and, in certain cases, permitted polygamy. Christian marriage is above the strength of human nature in our present fallen state, and needs Christian grace. It need not surprise us, then, that honest and enlightened men and women, far enough themselves from being of a licentious turn, yet ignorant of the Christian faith, and with no knowledge of, or belief in the Christian sacraments, should revolt at Catholic marriage, and labor not only to render it dissoluble, but easily dissoluble, and for slight, even trivial, causes.

But, though Godwin had a powerful influence on my mind, he did not absolutely master it. I would retain my own individuality, but I could not bring my mind to believe that all social organization, all associated action must be condemned as repugnant to justice. Man is social by nature, and he has wants which can be met only by the provisions of society. Grant that the depravities of individual character originate in government,—kingcraft and priestcraft; but in what have these originated? If they are unjust, as you maintain, there must be a source of injustice prior to them, and independent of them. Then their simple removal will not necessarily secure the reign of justice. Then how are we to remove them by simple individual action? By simple appeals to reason, by simply enlightening the understanding? But is it not a well-known fact that prejudice is a bar to enlightenment, and also that men are very far from acting always in accordance with their convictions of right? Men know what is just, and yet do it not. I find, when I would do good, evil is present with me, and the good I would, I do not. No: to remove cor-

rupt and corrupting governments, to overthrow kingcraft, to abolish priestcraft, to free men from superstition, from vain hopes and idle terrors, from the effects of false education, unfavorable circumstances, evil influences, the prejudices accumulating through long ages of ignorance and barbarism, and to render man the free, the noble, majestic being I would have him, I need something more than simple individual intelligence, and something more than the simple strength of individual will. I want and must have a greater than simple individual power. For the present, at least, I must avail myself of the principle of association, and, instead of sweeping away all organization, must endeavor to perfect social organization, and use it as a means of gaining the end I propose.

Here I found myself co-operating with the well-known Frances Wright, who seemed to me to have hit upon a just medium between the individualism of Godwin and the communism of Owen. Frances Wright was born in Scotland near the end of the last century, and inherited a considerable property. She had been highly educated, and was a woman of rare original powers, and extensive and varied information. She was brought up in the utilitarian principles of Jeremy Bentham, was often an inmate of the family of General La Fayette at La Grange, and in the general's suite she visited this country in 1824. Returning to England in 1825, she published a book on the United States, in a strain of almost unbounded eulogy of the American people and their institutions. She saw only one stain upon our character, one thing in our condition to censure or to deplore: that was negro-slavery, which struck her as it does most Europeans, as an anomaly, and wholly incompatible with our theory of human rights.

When in the next year Mr. Owen came, with his friends, to commence his experiment of creating a new moral world at New Harmony, Frances Wright came with him, not as a full believer in his crotchets, but to try an experiment, devised with Jefferson, La Fayette, and others, for the emancipation of the negro slaves. The plan was to make the slaves work out the price of their own emancipation, and to prepare them, while they were doing it, by a peculiar system of training, for freedom. She believed it possible to make the labor of the slaves sufficiently profitable to support themselves, and to remunerate her for the price she must pay their owners for them; and while they were

doing this, by subjecting them to the moral and intellectual discipline of her philosophical principles, or the system of education she proposed to adopt, to render them moral and intelligent, free and independent in character, in every respect the equals of the whites. She accordingly purchased a plantation and some negroes at Nashoba in the state of Tennessee, about fifteen miles from Memphis, and commenced her experiment, which failed in less than two years, as she alleged, in consequence of her own illness for several months, and her inability to find persons to manage it, who combined the several qualities requisite, on the one hand, for its economical management, and, on the other, for carrying out her educational system, or her moral and philosophical ideas. Yet it should be mentioned to her honor that she gave her slaves their freedom, and settled them in Hayti, which was then a republic under President Boyer.

The negro experiment having failed, Fanny enlarged her views, and discovered that the people of the United States were not as yet prepared to engage in earnest for the abolition of slavery, that the whites were as much slaves as the blacks, and that negro slavery was only a branch of the huge tree of evil, which overshadowed the whole land. There was little wisdom in wasting one's time and resources in the attempt to lop it off while the tree itself was left standing. The axe must be laid at the root of the tree, and slavery must be abolished only as the result of a general emancipation, and a radical reform of the American people themselves.

The first step to be taken was to rouse the American mind to a sense of its rights and dignity, to emancipate it from superstition, from its subjection to the clergy, and its fear of unseen powers; to withdraw it from the contemplation of the stars or an imaginary heaven after death, and fix it on the great and glorious work of promoting man's earthly well-being. The second step was, by political action, to get adopted, at the earliest practicable moment, a system of state schools, in which all the children from two years old and upward should be fed, clothed, in a word, maintained, instructed, and educated at the public expense. In furtherance of the first object, Fanny prepared a course of lectures on *Knowledge*, which she proposed to deliver in the principal cities and towns of the Union. She had acquired a high literary reputation, and had still property enough left to permit her to go through the country and deliver her lec-

tures at her own expense. She thought she possessed advantages in the fact that she was a woman, for there would for that reason be a greater curiosity to hear her, and she would be permitted to speak with greater boldness and directness against the clergy and superstition, than would be one of the other sex.

She commenced delivering her lectures in the autumn of 1828, at Cincinnati, and soon produced no little excitement. She gave them subsequently in New York, Boston, Philadelphia, Albany, Utica, Auburn, Buffalo, and various other places. Her lectures were eminently popular. Her free, flowing, and ornate style,—French rather than English,—her fine, rich, musical voice, highly cultivated and possessing great power, her graceful manner, her tall, commanding figure, her wit and sarcasm, her apparent honesty of purpose, and deep and glowing enthusiasm, made her one of the most pleasing and effective orators, man or woman, that I have ever heard. The Evangelicals, of course, were hostile to her, and said all manner of things against her, for the most part untrue, and did all in their power, not, of course, to disprove her doctrine, but to render her personally odious. This was particularly the case in Auburn, Cayuga Co., N. Y. Auburn was then a village containing between three and four thousand inhabitants, divided, as usual in all our villages, into a large number of sects. The hard things that were said of Fanny came to her ears, and at the close of one of her lectures, she quietly, and in the sweetest manner imaginable, remarked:

"We have here this evening considered the subject of religion. To-morrow evening, at half past seven o'clock, we will meet again at this place to discuss the subject of morals. I observed, in driving through your beautiful village to-day, the spires of six meeting-houses, belonging to as many different religions denominations, and I was told that there were two or three other denominations that have not as yet erected meeting-houses for themselves. It is evident that religion must have been well discussed among you, and that you are eminently a religious people. I have travelled much and visited many countries, and in no place have I been so uncourteously received, or been the subject of so much personal insult, as in your most religious village. Perhaps it will not be inappropriate for us to spend one evening in discussing the subject of morals."

About the time that she commenced her brief career as a

public lecturer on *Knowledge*, Fanny, in connection with Robert Dale Owen, the eldest son of Robert Owen, and Robert L. Jennings, a Scotchman, started a weekly journal in New York, called *The Free Enquirer*, converted an old meeting-house into a "Hall of Science," and put in operation all the machinery of a most vigorous propagandism. In 1830 she revisited France, where she became the wife of M. Darusmont, who, as William Phiquepal, had been her travelling companion and man of business during her lecturing tours. She was present in Paris during the revolution of July, and remained abroad for several years. She returned, indeed, to this country, finally took up her residence in Cincinnati, the wreck of what she was in the days when I knew and admired her, and where, not long since, deserted by all her former friends, and in poverty, if not destitution, she died. The only person, as far as I can learn, who did not desert her, but did all she could to lighten her afflictions, to soothe her last moments, and to direct her mind to the only source of help and comfort, was a most estimable lady, a convert from Quakerism to Catholicity.

Poor Fanny! I have always regretted her fate. Her husband treated her, I have understood, with great unkindness and brutality. And certain it is, that after her marriage her charm was broken, and her strength departed from her. Yet few who knew her as I did, when she was about thirty years of age, still fresh and blooming, with her feminine sweetness and grace, and her masculine intellect, however they may regard her principles, will fail to remember her with much personal kindness. She followed out with logical consistency the principle of private judgment in faith and morals; and none who recognize that principle, and deny all infallible teaching, have any right to reproach her. She did great harm, and the morals of the American people feel even to-day the injury she did them; but she acted according to her lights, and was at least no hypocrite. Many who condemn her have been and are greater sinners than she.

CHAPTER VII.—THE WORKING-MEN.

The great measure on which Fanny and her friends relied for ultimate success was the system of public schools, which, as I have said, were to include the maintenance, as well as the instruction and education, of all the children of the state. These schools were intended to deprive as

well as to relieve parents of all care and responsibility of their children after a year or two years of age. It was assumed that parents were in general incompetent to train up their children in the way they should go, to form them with the right sort of characters, tempers, and aims; and therefore it was proposed that the state should take the whole charge of the children, provide proper establishments, and teachers and governors for them, till they should reach the age of majority. This would liberate the parents, and secure the principal advantages of a community of goods.

The aim was, on the one hand, to relieve marriage of its burdens, and to remove the principal reasons for making it indissoluble; and, on the other, to provide for bringing up all children in a rational manner to be reasonable men and women, that is, free from superstition, all belief in God and immortality, or regard for the invisible, and make them look upon this life as their only life, this earth as their only home, and the promotion of their earthly interests and enjoyments as their only end. The three great enemies to worldly happiness were held to be religion, marriage or family, and private property. Once get rid of those three institutions, and we may hope soon to realize our earthly paradise. For religion we were to substitute science, that is, science of the world of the five senses only; for private property, a community of goods; and for private families, a community of wives. No, not a community of wives, for in our new moral world there were to be no wives or husbands; there were to be only men and women, who would be free to cohabit together, according to their mutual likings, and for as long a time as they found it mutually agreeable, and no longer. Marriage as a sacrament, as a sacred thing, as a mystery, making of the twain one flesh, was denied as a superstition, or an invention of the priests, to render their own office so much the more necessary and profitable; but marriage as the expression of mutual love between a man and a woman was to be recognized. Yet, as the end of all marriage is mutual happiness, and as that results only from mutual love, it follows that where the love is wanting the marriage is illegitimate, is immoral, and should never take place, or should cease.

The great defect of this theory is in the assumption that the mutual love which is demanded by marriage is not within the power of free-will, and therefore does not depend on the parties themselves. The love promised in the marriage contract is not love as an uncontrollable sentiment, but

love as a free, voluntary affection,—love in the sense in which we are free to love or not to love as we choose. Marriage, in the Christian sense, is certainly indefensible, if we accept the modern theory that love is necessary, *fatal*, independent of free-will. Taking this theory, a theory which follows logically from Calvinistic and infidel philosophy, and is assumed as undeniable by all our modern novelists and romancers, the doctrine of Mary Wollstonecraft, William Godwin, the poet Shelly, Robert Owen, Frances Wright, and the advocates of Free-Love, is reasonable and just. Christian marriage, if that theory be true, is immoral, because no one has a right to promise to do what it does not depend on his free-will to perform. Christian marriage proceeds on the assumption that man, with the grace of God, is free to love, and can love, and faithfully perform, if he chooses, all that is implied in the marriage contract. But Calvinism and infidelity alike denying free-will in fact, even when they do not in name, are obliged to reject marriage in the Christian sense, and, to be consistent, should assert what is called Free-Love.

There is no question that the views of matrimony taken by Fanny Wright and her school are abominable, but it does not necessarily follow that they were adopted from loose or licentious passions, or from really immoral motives. They were and are justified by the theory of love adopted by very nearly the whole non-Catholic world. It must not, moreover, be assumed that they appeared to us in the gross and shocking light that they do to the public, or even to myself at the present time. Things do not always appear to us at twenty-six as they do at fifty-four. We saw clearly enough that they were not views to be carried into practice in the present state of society, and we proposed them to be adopted only by a future generation trained and prepared in our system of schools founded and sustained by the public, to adopt without abusing them. In our minds, the wonder-working effects of these schools were to precede their practical realization.

Our illusion, after our misapprehension of the nature of the love promised in marriage, was the undue estimate we placed on education. Our theory was, that the child is passive in the hands of the educator, and may be moulded as clay in the hands of the potter. Yet, in this we did but follow the popular philosophy of Locke and Condillac, and draw the conclusions warranted by the premises supplied us by

the age and country. The sensism of Locke and the utilitarian morals of Paley were then taught in nearly all our colleges and universities. Most of the generation to which I belong have been brought up to believe that the mind has no inherent character, and is in the beginning a mere *tabula rasa*, a blank sheet, with simply the capacity of receiving the characters which may be written on it. It is only recently that Locke and Paley have been dethroned in our universities, and they are not yet expelled from our popular literature. Thirty years ago the whole non-Catholic world believed in the power of education to redeem society, and to secure the reign of truth and justice; and that belief has still many a stalwart champion, not precisely of the Fanny-Wright school.

Be all this as it may, our dependence was placed on education in a system of public schools managed after a plan of our own, or rather of William Phiquepal, a Frenchman, subsequently the husband of Fanny Wright, and who I see has not long since been cast in a suit for damages for the neglect and abuse of some of the pupils he brought with him from France to this country, and whom he pretended to educate. I know something of his mode of managing with these boys; I knew it from his own lips, and him I never trusted. But the more immediate work was to get our system of schools adopted. To this end it was proposed to organize the whole Union secretly, very much on the plan of the Carbonari of Europe, of whom at that time I knew nothing. The members of this secret society were to avail themselves of all the means in their power, each in his own locality, to form public opinion in favor of education by the state at the public expense, and to get such men elected to the legislatures as would be likely to favor our purposes. How far the secret organization extended, I do not know; but I do know that a considerable portion of the State of New York was organized, for I was myself one of the agents for organizing it. I, however, became tired of the work, and abandoned it after a few months. Whether the organization still exists, or whether it has ever exerted any influence or not, is more than I am able to say, or have taken the pains to ascertain.

Our next step, and in connection with this, was the formation of what was known as the Working-Men's Party, started in Philadelphia in 1828, and in New York in the year following. This party was devised and started princi-

pally by Robert Dale Owen, Robert L. Jennings, George H. Evans, and a few others, without exception Europeans by birth. The purpose in the formation of this party was to get control of the political power of the state, so as to be able to use it for establishing our system of schools. We hoped, by linking our cause with the ultra-democratic sentiment of the country, which had had, from the time of Jefferson and Tom Paine, something of an anti-Christian character, by professing ourselves the bold and uncompromising champions of equality, by expressing a great love for the people, and a deep sympathy with the laborer, whom we represented as defrauded and oppressed by his employer, by denouncing all proprietors as aristocrats, and by keeping the more unpopular features of our plan as far in the background as possible, to enlist the majority of the American people under the banner of the Working-Men's Party; nothing doubting that, if we could once raise that party to power, we could use it to secure the adoption of our educational system.

Into this party I entered with enthusiasm. I established in Western New York a journal in its support, and co-operated with *The Daily Sentinel*, conducted by my friends in the city. But I soon tired of the party, and gave my influence and that of my journal, in the autumn of 1830, to the Jackson candidate, E. T. Throop, against Frank Granger, the candidate of the Anti-masons, for Governor. This defection ruined my journal as a party journal, and a few days after the election, I disposed of it to my partner, and ceased to be its editor. The truth is, I never was and never could be a party man, or work in the traces of a party. I abandoned, indeed, after a year's devotion to it, the Working-Men's Party, but not the working-men's cause, and to that cause I have been faithful according to my light and ability.

I was not naturally a radical, or even inclined to radicalism; but I had a deep sympathy with the poorer and more numerous classes. This sympathy I still have, and trust I shall have as long as I live. I believed, and still believe, that the rights of labor are not sufficiently protected, and that the modern system of large industries, which requires for its prosecution heavy outlays of capital, or credit, makes the great mass of operatives virtually slaves,—slaves, in all except the name, as much so as are the negroes on one of our southern plantations. It is a system which places the laborer

under all the disadvantages, without securing him the advantages, of freedom. I looked, and still look, upon democracy, as it is called, which has its expression in universal suffrage and eligibility, as affording no adequate protection to the laboring classes, as in fact no better than a mockery. The British system, the mercantile system, the credit system, the banking system, the system which gives the supremacy to trade and manufactures, inaugurated by the Peace of Utrecht in 1713, I regarded, and still regard, as worse than the serfdom of the middle ages, and worse even than slavery as it has existed or can exist in any Christian country. It cannot last forever; but it is too powerful to be successfully combated at present. The industrial and commercial supremacy of Great Britain must be annihilated before we can get rid of it, and that supremacy is not easily shaken; for Russia is the only modern nation that is in a condition to offer it the slightest resistance, and Russia is preparing to adopt it.

My few months' experience as the editor of a working-men's journal satisfied me that it was idle to attempt to carry out our plans by means of a working-men's party, or, so to speak, a proletarian party. The working-men, except in the cities and manufacturing villages, do not, in our own country, constitute, as a distinct class, the majority. They are neither numerous nor strong enough to get or to wield the political power of the state. They cannot afford to engage in the struggle to obtain it. Capital or credit, in its various forms and ramifications, is too strong for them. The movement we commenced could only excite a war of man against money; and all history and all reasoning in the case prove that in such a war money carries it over man. Money commands the supplies, and can hold out longer than they who have nothing but their manhood. It can starve them into submission. I wished sincerely and earnestly to benefit the working-men, but I saw, as soon as I directed my attention to the point, that I could effect nothing by appealing to them as a separate class. My policy must be, not a working-men's party, but to induce all classes of society to co-operate in efforts for the working-men's cause. The rich and poor, the learned and unlearned, the producers and consumers, the headworkers and the handworkers, must unite, work together, or no reforms were practicable, no amelioration of the condition of any class was to be hoped for.

No doubt I was for a moment fascinated by the visionary schemes of my friends, but my motive for supporting the

Working-Men's party was never precisely theirs. I did not do it merely for the sake of the proposed system of education, but with the hope of benefiting the working-men themselves. I acquiesced in that system of education for a moment, but never really approved it. I was a husband and a father, and did not altogether relish the idea of breaking up the family and regarding my children as belonging to the state rather than to me. Parents might not be in all cases well qualified to bring up their children properly, but where was the state to get its army of nurses, teachers, governors, &c. better qualified? What certainty was there that these public schools would be better conducted, or be more favorable to the morals and intelligence of children, than the family itself? After all, what could these schools do for our children? They would bring them up to be rational, it was said; that is, free from superstition, free from all religious prejudices, ignorant of all morality resting for its foundation on belief in God, in immortality, in moral accountability, and restricted in all their thoughts and affections to their five senses and the material world, therefore to purely material goods and sensual pleasures. Suppose the schools to fulfil these expectations, they will turn out our children only well-trained animals—a sort of learned pigs. After all, is this desirable?

I cannot carry out my reforms without love, disinterestedness, sacrifice. If man is a mere animal, born to propagate his species, and to die and be no more, why shall I love him, and sacrifice myself for him? Where is his moral worth, his dignity, the greatness and majesty of his nature? What matters it, whether, during his existence of a day, he is happy or miserable, since to-morrow he dies, and it is all the same? For a being so worthless, wherefore devote myself? What is there in him to inspire me with heroism, and enable me in his behalf to dare poverty, reproach, exile, the rack, the dungeon, the scaffold, or the stake?

No longer irritated against religion by being obliged by my profession to seem to profess what I did not believe, I found myself almost instantly reverting with regret to my early religious principles and affections. The moment I avowedly threw off all religion and began to work without it, I found myself impotent. I did not need religion to pull down or destroy society; but the moment I wished to build up, to effect something positive, I found I could not proceed a single step without it. I was compelled to make brick

without straw. Philosophers had told me, and I had believed, that self-interest would suffice as a motive power, that all one has to do is to show men what is really for their interest, and they will do it. Nothing more false. Men are selfish enough, no doubt of that; but nothing in the world is harder than to get them to labor for their own best interest. They act from habit, from routine, from appetite and passion, and will sacrifice their highest and best good to their momentary lusts. It is an old complaint, that men do not act as well as they know. They see the right, approve it, and yet pursue the wrong. It is not enough to show them their interest, to convince their understandings. I must have some power by which I can overcome what religious people call the flesh, —a power which will strengthen the will, and enable men to subdue their passions and control their lusts. Where am I to find this power except in religious ideas and principles, in the belief in God and immortality, in duty, moral accountability?

I need, then, religion of some sort as the agent to induce men to make the sacrifices required in adoption of my plans for working out the reform of society, and securing to man his earthly felicity. Certainly, I was far enough from the Christian thought; but this conviction, real and sincere, was a step in my ascent from the abyss into which I had fallen. Certainly, it does not follow that religion is true because it is needed to secure man his earthly well-being; but the conviction that it is necessary for that purpose, if not rudely treated, may, in an ingenuous mind lead to something more. I had fixed it in my mind that the creation of an earthly paradise, a heaven on earth for my race, was the end for which I should labor; and I saw that I could not gain that end without the agency of religion. Therefore I accepted religion once more, and, on quitting my journal, resumed my old profession of a preacher, though of what particular Gospel it would be difficult to say.

CHAPTER VIII.—RELIGION OF HUMANITY.

I resumed preaching, but on my own hook, as an independent preacher responsible to no church, sect, or denomination. Do you say I was wrong, that I acted precipitately, and should have waited till my beard had grown? Perhaps you are right. But perhaps I was not in a condition in which I could wait. A man may often be placed in a situation in which he must act, although perfectly aware that

to act is premature. I was still young, only just entering my twenty-eighth year, and knew perfectly well that I had made no thorough examination of the great questions which had been raised in my mind; but I must do something, not indeed what I would, but what I could. The question with me was simply, what in my condition was practicable, and whether what to me was practicable was honest, such as involved the violation of no principle of natural morality. Satisfied on this point, I could resume my profession with a good conscience, provided I pretended to believe no more than I really did believe, and did not attempt to dogmatize in matters of opinion, or give myself out for what I was not.

"But you ran without being sent." Certainly I did; but that was my privilege as a Protestant. No Protestant had or has a right to upbraid me, for all Protestant ministers run without being sent. None of them have received, in the ecclesiastical sense, a mission. I stood on the same footing with Luther, Calvin, and all the Reformers. They were all preachers on their own hook, self-commissioned ministers. I could be no more bound by them than they were by the Pope; or by any Protestant sect than that sect itself was bound by the Catholic Church, from which it had separated.

Do you allege that my creed was unorthodox? What standard of orthodoxy had I as a Protestant? The Bible? The Bible as each one understands it for himself, or as it is interpreted by a divinely-commissioned authority? The essence of Protestantism is, in denying all such authority, and in asserting the right of private interpretation. On Protestant principles, orthodoxy is *my* doxy, heterodoxy is *your* doxy. For the Protestant, each man's private judgment is the only admissible standard of orthodoxy. Leave me then to follow what seems right in my own eyes, or else go back yourselves to Mother Church; prove to me that your private judgment is more worthy to be followed than mine, before you arraign me as heterodox because I do not follow it. You differ from me as much as I do from you; and why is it heterodoxy for me to differ from you, any more than it is for you to differ from me?

My creed, no doubt, was very short, but no Protestant had any right to snub me because it was not longer. In resuming my profession, I acted as a consistent Protestant; and as I had already been set apart to the work of the min-

istry by the laying on of the hands of a Protestant presbytery, I stood as legitmately in the pulpit as any Protestant minister does or can. So far, I was irreproachable on Protestant principles. I will say this much for myself, that never did I, after reascending the pulpit, profess to be what I was not. I never claimed to be an authorized preacher, or to have authority to dogmatize on any subject. I never pretended to be a doctor. I professed to be only an humble inquirer after truth; and all I professed to do was to stimulate my hearers also to inquire after it for themselves. I warned them that I was a fallible man, and that they must believe nothing simply because I believed or asserted it. There is, my brethren, I said to them, more truth than we have yet found. Even what truth we really do hold, may be modified as we discover more truth. As yet we are learners and inquirers; and we must inquire earnestly for the truth, and hold ourselves ready to embrace it, let it come in what shape it may, and follow it, let it lead whithersoever it will.

I have never reproached myself for the position I assumed after my connection with Fanny-Wrightism. I followed the best light I had, honestly, sincerely, unflinchingly. God gave me this grace, and he finally led me, without my foreseeing whither he was leading me, into the bosom of his church. Yet when I recommenced preaching, I had hardly the simplest elements of natural religion. My great aim was, not to serve God, but to serve man; the love of my race, not the love of my Maker, moved me. I was still bent on social reform, and regarded religion and all things else solely in relation to that end. I found in me certain religious sentiments that I could not efface; certain religious beliefs or tendencies of which I could not divest myself. I regarded them as a law of my nature, as natural to man, as the noblest part of our nature, and as such I cherished them; but as the expression in me of an objective world I seldom pondered them. I found them universal, manifesting themselves, in some form, wherever man is found; but I received them, or supposed I received them, on the authority of humanity or human nature, and professed to hold no religion except that of humanity. I had become a believer in humanity, and put humanity in the place of God. The only God I recognized was the divine in man, the divinity of humanity, one alike with God and with man, which I supposed to be the real meaning of the Christian doctrine of the

Incarnation, the mystery of Emmanuel, or God with us,—God manifest in the flesh. There may be an unmanifested God, and certainly is; but the only God who exists for us is the God in man, the active and living principle of human nature.

I regarded Jesus Christ as divine in the sense in which all men are divine, and human in the sense in which all men are human. I took him as my model man, and regarded him as a moral and social reformer, who sought, by teaching the truth under a religious envelope, and practising the highest and purest morality, to meliorate the earthly condition of mankind; but I saw nothing miraculous in his conception or birth, nothing supernatural in his person and character, in his life or his doctrine. He came to redeem the world, as does every great and good man, and deserved to be held in universal honor and esteem as one who remained firm to the truth amid every trial, and finally died on the cross, a martyr to his love of mankind. ' As a social reformer, as one devoted to the progress and well-being of man in this world, I thought I might liken myself to him, and call myself by his name. I called myself a *Christian*, not because I took him for my master, not because I believed all he believed or taught, but because, like him, I was laboring to introduce a new order of things, and to promote the happiness of my kind. I used the Bible as a good Protestant, took what could be accommodated to my purpose, and passed over the rest as belonging to an age now happily outgrown. I followed the example of the carnal Jews, and gave an earthly sense to all the promises and prophecies of the Messias, and looked for my reward in this world.

For several months I went on preaching, very much as I had lectured during the time of my avowed unbelief. Very little was changed except my tone and temper. I was willing to agree with the Christian world as far as I could, and no longer wished to fight it. But I found myself gradually, I hardly know how or wherefore, cherishing views and feelings more and more in accordance, I will not say with Christianity, but with natural religion. I began to approximate to a belief in God as a creator and moral governor, not so much from any reasoning on the subject, as from the silent operations of my natural religious sentiments. I fell in with a sermon by the celebrated Dr. Channing on the *Dignity of Human Nature*. Its eloquence, its noble sentiments, and its elevated thoughts, affected me powerfully,

and made me almost a worshipper of man. It made me think so highly of man, of his deathless energies and glorious affinities that I felt contented to believe that his soul could not die, but must live forever. I saw in man, more clearly and more vividly than I had before, something worth living for, something one could love, and, if need be, die for; I found myself almost instantly abandoning my old doctrine of interested for disinterested affection. There was something higher and nobler in man than I had hitherto admitted; something which could serve as a basis to that love of mankind necessary as the agent for introducing the social changes and organizations through which I hoped to obtain my earthly paradise.

Dr. Channing's writings drew my attention to the Unitarians, a denomination with which I had previously had no acquaintance. I found that they were liberal, that they eschewed all creeds and confessions, allowed the unrestrained exercise of reason, and left their ministers each to stand on his own private convictions, and to arrange matters each as best he could with his own congregation. The few members I met were educated, cultivated, intelligent, respectable, and I felt that among them I should find my home and my natural associates. I offered myself to a Unitarian congregation in the summer of 1832, and was accepted and settled as their minister. Then, almost for the first time, I began to study philosophy and theology with a little method and earnestness. I was thrown into a society new to me, and had access to a whole literature to which I had hitherto been a stranger. I learned French and a little German, and began the study of the rationalistic literatures of France and Germany, more especially of France. A new world, or rather many new worlds, seemed to open to me, and I almost forgot my socialistic dreams.

The first work I read in French, and which held me enchained quite too long, was a work, forgotten now, of Benjamin Constant on *Religion, considered in its Origin, its Forms, and its Developments.* It chimed in with my modes of thinking at the time, and seemed to be just the book I wanted to enable me to clear up, develop, systematize, and confirm with the requisite historical proofs my own convictions. Benjamin Constant is a historical character. He was born in Switzerland of a French Huguenot family, and educated in Geneva, Scotland, and Germany. He was recognized as a French citizen under the Directory, and for sev-

eral years played a prominent part as a French politician. Accompanying Madame de Staël when the First Consul exiled her from Paris, travelling with her in Italy, Germany, and England, and residing with her for some time at Coppet, he devoted himself to literature, till the fall of Napoleon in 1814. He was admitted to the council of the Emperor during the Hundred Days, and after the second restoration, became a distinguished member of the Chamber of Deputies, on the liberal side, and took an active part in French politics till his death in 1830.

Benjamin Constant had been brought up a Protestant, and became, like so many others of his generation, an unbeliever in revelation, perhaps even in God, and is said not to have lived a very edifying life. He commenced his work with the intention of directing it against religion; but he was forced by his inquiries and discoveries to write, as he believed, in its favor. His theory, not peculiar to himself, and held by men far profounder and more erudite than he, is, that religion has its origin in a sentiment natural to man, which may be termed a law of his nature. This sentiment is vague and not easily defined. It is that in man which places him in relation with the unseen, makes him tremble before the invisible with fear, or thrill with delight, and leads him to open some means of communication with supernal powers.

This sentiment is universal, an instinct, or, it may be, a mysterious revelation made by the Invisible to the heart of man, which finds its natural expression in the act of worship. But, blind in itself, the object worshipped will be proportioned to the degree of intellectual light possessed by the worshipper. The form depends on the intelligence, and the sentiment adapts itself to any form from the lowest African fetichism to the highest and purest Jewish and Christian monotheism. The sentiment itself is always the same, as unalterable and permanent as the nature of man, but its forms are variable, and transitory. Man embodies in them his ideas or conceptions of the true, the just, the holy; but, as these ideas are progressive, he is obliged with each step in their progress to break his old forms become too strait for him, and to create new and broader forms, more in harmony with his advancing intelligence. Men began, in the lowest forms of fetichism, with the worship of wood, stones, animals, four-footed beasts, and creeping things. From fetichism they advanced in process of time to the worship of the sun, moon, and stars, or the hosts of heaven, and the ele-

ments of nature. At first man worships the outward, visible object itself, but gradually refining on the object, and rising to metaphysical conceptions, he takes it simply as a symbol of the invisible, and worships no longer the bull, but the spirit or manitou of the bull—no longer the sun, but the spirit of the sun. In this way he rises from Sabianism to Oriental, Egyptian, and Persian symbolism, and to the polished and graceful forms of Greek and Roman polytheism. Refining and philosophizing still more on his ideas and the phenomena of nature, he ascends to the Jewish, and from the Jewish to the Christian monotheism.

Man's natural tendency is to embody his ideas and sentiments in fixed forms or institutions. He wishes to find today the friends of yesterday. He dreads change, and would render his acquisitions permanent and unchangeable. The jugglers, afterwards developed into a priesthood, take advantage of this, and labor to keep the forms of religion fixed and stationary, and to prevent all religious progress, all growth or expansion of religious ideas. This is especially the case in the East, where the sacerdotal religions obtain and give to society a theocratic organization and government. Originally the sacerdotal religions obtained even in Greece and Rome, but gradually the warrior caste emancipated themselves from the sacerdotal, established civil governments proper, and obtained for religion the freedom to follow the natural progress and development of the nation. There is a great progress in the moral and religious ideas of the Odyssey on those of the Iliad, and hence the two poems could never have been composed by one and the same man. The Roman polytheism, again, is far in advance of the Grecian. Indeed Christianity is only one step in advance of Roman polytheism,—a step to which the human mind naturally tended.

Each new form or institution of religion is not only an advance on its predecessor, but is the stepping-stone to newer and still greater progress. Each in turn is outgrown, ceases to be in harmony with the wants and intelligence of the age or country; and when it becomes so, men begin to criticize it, to point out its defects, its inconsistencies, and to break away from it. Do not be alarmed. These *critical* periods in history are no doubt terrible, such as one dreads to live in, but they are essential to the progress of man and society. People think religion is about to desert them, and they look upon the advanced minds longing for something purer,

higher, truer, and broader, as their enemies, as the enemies of the gods, as infidels, blasphemers, and condemn them to drink hemlock, or to be crucified between two thieves. Such periods of criticism, of destruction of old forms, have occurred several times in the history of the human race. We meet one in Greece commenced by Socrates and continued by Plato; another which prepared the way for the introduction and establishment of the Christian Church; another which commenced in the sixteenth century of our era, when Catholicity had ceased to be in harmony with the wants and intelligence of the age, and which still continues. These periods of destruction and transition mark, not the decline of civilization, but its advance; and so far from being hostile to religion, they invariably prepare for it a more glorious future.

This theory of the progress of religion corresponded with my theory of the progress of mankind, and had for me many charms. I was prepared in advance to accept it, and did not at the time think of inquiring whether it really had any historical basis or not. No doubt had as yet arisen in my mind as to the truth of the doctrine of progress. A slight knowledge of history, as well as of philosophy, suffices to refute Benjamin Constant's theory. Truth is older than error, and monotheism—the belief and worship of one only God—is older than polytheism, older than fetichism, and is, in fact, the earliest form of religion recorded in history. But the truth or falsity of the theory under this relation was not the point which struck me with the most force. That was not the problem which I was interested at the time in solving. The point in the theory which struck my attention, and influenced my studies and action, was the fact alleged, that man naturally seeks to embody his religious ideas and sentiments in institutions, and that these institutions, serve as instruments of progress. What we now want, I said, is a new religious institution or church, one that shall embody the advanced intelligence of the age, and respond to all the new wants which time and events have developed. Every institution, in that it is an institution, has something fixed, inflexible, and inexpansive. Hence no institution can answer the wants of the race in all times and places. The various religions, fetichism, Sabianism, symbolism, polytheism, Judaism, Catholicism, have all been good and useful in their day, when and where they harmonized with the wants and intelligence of

the people; but they have all been outgrown, and the human race has cast them off, as the grown man casts off the garments of his childhood. Catholicity was good in its day, during the thousand years which intervened between the fall of the Roman Empire of the West and the rise of Luther and his associates; for during that period it was in harmony with the general intelligence, responded to the highest conceptions, and to the deepest wants of the soul then developed. It led the age, commanded respect, commanded obedience and love, because it aided the soul in its progress, inspired the heart with noble sentiments, and prepared its adherents to engage in grand and heroic enterprises for the human race. But fixed and inflexible, immovable and unalterable in itself, it ceased to be favorable to progress the moment it had brought the race up to its own level, and must from that moment become a let and a hindrance to progress, —a mischievous institution, which must be demolished and cleared away to make room for a new and better institution.

That Catholicity had been outgrown and ceased to be useful, was evinced by the reformation. Protestantism was not a religion, was not a church, and in itself contained no germ of religious organization. It was not in any sense an institution. Its mission was simply one of destruction, as I wrote in *The Christian Examiner*, in 1834. But its rise proved that there were wants and lights which Catholicity did not meet—could not satisfy. What, then, is our mission? Not to revive Catholicity, already become superannuated in the sixteenth century, and struck with death by Luther, when he threw his inkstand in the face of the devil; not to continue Protestantism, which was simply critical, destructive, and without the slightest organic character or tendency, or the least power to erect a temple of concord and peace, of union and progress. What then? It is to labor directly for a new religious institution, church, or organization, which shall embody the most advanced ideas and sentiments of the race, and be *The Church of the Future*, by containing in itself what was wanting in the religions of the past,—the principle of its own progress.

CHAPTER IX.—UNION AND PROGRESS.

I did not lose sight of the great end I proposed,—the progress of man and society, and the realization of a heaven on earth. I was working in reference to it even while I was pursuing my historical and philosophical researches, and

maturing my religious theories. I had been forced to resort to religious ideas and sentiments for the power to work effectually for it; and I now found that I must have a religious organization, institution, or church, in order to render these sentiments practically efficient. This much I had gained from Benjamin Constant's great work, and it was nearly all that I did gain from it. The work of destruction, commenced by the Reformation, which had introduced an era of criticism and revolution, had, I thought, been carried far enough. All that was dissoluble had been dissolved. All that was destructible had been destroyed, and it was time to begin the work of reconstruction,—a work of reconciliation and love.

Irreligious ideas and sentiments are disorganizing and destructive in their nature, and cannot be safely cherished for a single moment after the work of destruction is completed. When the work to be done is that of construction, of building up, of organizing, of founding something, we must resort to religious ideas and sentiments, for they, having love for their principle, are plastic, organic, constructive, and the only ideas and sentiments that are so. They are necessary to the new organization or institution of the race demanded; and the organization or institution, what I called the church, is necessary to the progress of man and society, or the creation of an earthly paradise. The first thing to be done is to cease our hostility to the past, discontinue the work of destruction; abandon the old war against the papacy, which has no longer any significance, and in a spirit of universal love and conciliation, turn our attention to the work of founding a religious institution, or effecting a new church organization, adapted to our present and future wants.

This we are now, I thought, in a condition to attempt. Men are beginning to understand that Protestantism is no-churchism, is no positive religion; and while it serves the purpose of criticism and destruction, it cannot meet the wants of the soul, or erect the temple in which the human race may assemble to worship in concord and peace. Unitarianism has demolished Calvinism, made an end in all thinking minds of every thing like dogmatic Protestantism, and Unitarianism itself satisfies nobody. It is negative, cold, lifeless, and all advanced minds among Unitarians are dissatisfied with it, and are craving something higher, better, more living, and life-giving. They are weary of doubt, uncer-

tainty, disunion, individualism, and crying out from the bottom of their hearts for faith, for love, for union. They feel that life has well-nigh departed from the world; that religion is but an empty name, and morality is mere decorum or worldly prudence; that men neither worship God nor love one another. Society as it is, is a lie, a sham, a charnel-house, a valley of dry bones. O that the Spirit of God would once more pass by, and say unto these dry bones, "Live"! So I felt, so felt others; and whoever enjoyed the confidence of the leading Unitarian ministers in Boston and its vicinity from 1830 to 1840, well knows that they were sick at heart with what they had, and were demanding in their interior souls a religious institution of some sort, in which they could find shelter from the storms of this wintry world, and some crumbs of the bread of life to keep them from starving. Not only in Boston was this cry heard. It came to us on every wind from all quarters,—from France, from Germany, from England even; and Carlyle, in his *Sartor Resartus*, seemed to lay his finger on the plague-spot of the age. Men had reached the centre of indifference; under a broiling sun in the *Rue d'Enfer*, had pronounced the everlasting "No." Were they never to be able to pronounce the everlasting "Yes"?

Among them all I was probably the most hopeful, and the most disposed to act. If I lacked faith in God, I had faith in humanity. The criticisms on all subjects sacred and profane, the bold investigations of every department of life, continued unwearied for three hundred years, by the most intrepid, the most energetic, and the most enlightened portion of mankind, had, I thought, sufficiently developed ideas and sentiments, and obtained for us all the light needed, all the materials wanted for commencing the work of reorganization, and casting broad and deep the foundations of the Church of the Future. All that was wanting was to collect the ideas which these three hundred years of criticism and investigation had developed, and mould them into one harmonious, complete, and living system, and then to take that system as the principle and law of the new moral and religious organization. Whence that system, formed from the union of various and isolated ideas, was to derive its life, its principle of unity and vitality, so as to be living and effective, I did not at the time specially consider. I supposed ideas themselves were potent, but, hard pressed, I probably should have said, they are potent by the potency of the human mind, or the divinity in man.

There was a moment when I looked to Dr. Channing, the foremost man among the Unitarians, as the one who was to take the lead in this work of reorganization. His reputation in 1834 was high, and he loomed up at a distance in my eyes as the great man of the age; but a closer view, an intimate personal acquaintance with him, soon disabused me. Dr. Channing had done me great service in the beginning of my efforts to rise from the abyss of unbelief into which I had fallen; he was my warm, considerate, and steady friend ever after to the day of his death. He consoled me, encouraged me, aided me in various ways; and I can never forget my personal obligations to him. I hold, and always shall hold, his memory in grateful respect. But he was not the great man many supposed him to be. He was benevolent, philanthropic, and anxious to do all in his power for the good of mankind, especially for the relief of the poorer and more numerous classes. He had a just horror of Calvinistic theology, and warred to the last against the Calvinistic view of human nature. He rejected with indignation the doctrine of total depravity, asserted in eloquent terms the dignity of human nature, and entertained the loftiest conceptions of the greatness and capacity of the human soul. He asserted so frequently and so strongly the dignity of man, that one of his brother ministers said of him, with more point than truth, however: "Dr. Channing makes man a great God, and God a little man." He certainly, in revolting against the Calvinistic doctrine, which so unduly depresses the human to make way, as it supposes, for sovereign grace, ran to the opposite extreme, and unduly depressed the divine, and exaggerated the human. He is answerable for no small portion of the soul-worship, which was for a time the fashionable idolatry of the metropolis of New England.

As a moral man, as a lover of his kind, as a sympathizer with the oppressed and the downtrodden, Dr. Channing was great, but he was never a clear and profound thinker. He was no philosopher, no theologian, and only moderately erudite. As a reasoner, he was feeble and confused; as a controversialist, he was no match for the Worcesters, Woods, and Stuarts in the ranks of his Calvinistic opponents. He was undoubtedly an eloquent sermonizer, and within his range the master of a style of great simplicity, sweetness, and beauty; but he lacked vigor and robustness, and left on his readers the impression that he was sickly and inclining to

sentimentalism. He was an eloquent and effective declaimer, and was felicitous, when the matter did not lie beyond his depth, in summing up and clearly stating the various points in a question after it had been thoroughly discussed by more vigorous and original, but less polished and graceful, minds than his own. He was never, to my knowledge, a leader in the world of thought or of action, and his study apparently was to come after others, and to rebuke or applaud them as seemed to him proper; and as he usually chose his time for intervening with adroitness, he not unfrequently received the credit due to those who had gone before and enlightened him.

Dr. Channing exerted for a long time a very great influence, and he did, no doubt, good service in demolishing New-England theology, and in liberalizing the New-England mind; but he had no original genius or tendency. His nature was not expansive, and with all his generous sentiment he lived, as it were, shut up in himself. He inclined strongly to individualism, and distrusted all associated action, though sometimes tolerating, and even encouraging it. His sympathy with Unitarians, as a distinct sect or denomination, was not strong, and he gave them the prestige of his name chiefly because they suffered reproach. Unitarianism he regarded as useful, in that it was opposed to Calvinism; but he was far from regarding it as the last word of Christian truth. His own mind, I apprehend, remained unsettled to the day of his death. He felt that he was still seeking after the truth, and waiting for it to dawn on him and the world. "There is," he would often say in his conversations with me, "a higher form of Christian truth and love needed and to be revealed than the world has yet seen; and I look with hope to the discussions and movements in the midst of which we live to elicit and realize it for mankind." He looked for this new manifestation of Christian truth and love in a socialist direction. I do not think he had any tendency to return towards New England orthodoxy, in which he was educated, as some Evangelicals have supposed. As far as I could discover, his tendency in the latter years of his life was to place less and less value on doctrines of any sort, and to make religion consist in sentiment alone. He rejected all creeds and confessions, rejected all church authority, and all church organization, though he died a member of the Church of the Disciples, founded by James Freeman Clarke, on the principle that true Christians are they who exclude no views,

whether true or false, and are ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth.

Dr. Channing was not and could not be the man to found the new order, and rival or more than rival a Moses, and a greater than Moses. Among my friends and acquaintances I found none. Perhaps the thought passed through my head that I was myself the destined man; but I did not entertain it. I could not be more than John the Baptist, or the Voice of one crying in the wilderness, "Behold the Lord cometh: prepare ye to meet him." I might, perhaps, be the Precursor of the new Messias, but not the new Messias himself. My business was, not to found the new church, but to proclaim its necessity, and to prepare men's minds and hearts to welcome it.

You smile at my simplicity or at my lofty estimate of myself, but with less justice than you suppose. I was a believer in humanity, and the God I professed to worship was the God in man. I was with the Unitarians, and had not advanced nearer to Christianity than they were: most of them thought not so near. But the New-England Unitarians, though very excellent people as the world goes, hold nothing that made me appear absurd or ridiculous in thinking as I did. They are the descendants of the New-England Arminians of the last century, who rejected the Calvinistic doctrine of election and reprobation, the restriction of the atonement to the elect, the inamissibility of grace, and asserted universal redemption, free-will, and other points very nearly as settled by the Council of Trent. In the early part of the present century, it was found that nearly all the Arminian churches and their ministers in New England had silently become Pelagian and Unitarian. They asserted human ability in relation to merit, and rejected both the Calvinistic and the Catholic doctrines of grace, denied the Atonement, the Incarnation, and the proper divinity of the Word, and reduced Christianity very nearly to simple natural religion or philosophy, as every consistent reasoner must do, who adopts the Pelagian heresy. Some few among the Unitarians, as Dr. Noah Worcester and, perhaps, Dr. Channing, adopted Arian views, or at least regarded our Lord as a superangelic person; but the majority, at least of the preachers, regarded him as a man, with one simple nature, and that human nature, though a man extraordinarily, some said miraculously, endowed, and divinely commissioned to teach truth and righteousness, chiefly through the singular purity and

holiness of his life. He taught nothing which, when once revealed, is above the ability of reason to comprehend, and was, in his moral perfection, in no sense above our aim or our reach. To be Christians in the full sense of the word, we must be what he was, sons of God, as he was the Son of God.

The Bible was regarded by Unitarians as containing, upon the whole, a faithful and trustworthy record of the revelations of truth which God at sundry times and in divers places had been pleased to make to mankind; but not as plenarily inspired, or as in all respects free from the errors and prejudices of the times in which it was written. Holy men spake of old as they were moved by the Holy Ghost, that is, by a pure and holy spirit or interior disposition, and may do so now. Men are as near to God to-day as they were two thousand years ago, and may, if they choose, have as intimate communion with him, and be as truly inspired by him.

In regard to another life, the Unitarians were not precisely agreed among themselves. A few held the orthodox view of a future judgment and the endless punishment of the wicked; now and then one thought there would be a final judgment, and that the wicked, those who died wicked, would be condemned, and then annihilated. Some believed in future disciplinary punishment, the restoration of the wicked, and the ultimate holiness and happiness of all men; others, and the majority, held that the future life would be simply a continuation, under other and perhaps more favorable conditions, of our present natural life, in which we should take rank according to the progress made here, and in which we might grow better and happier, or worse and more miserable forever. With these last, so far as I had any fixed views on the subject, I agreed.

The heaven the Unitarians promised in the world to come, was in the natural order,—a sort of natural beatitude, such as some Catholics have supposed might be enjoyed by those in the least unpleasant part of hell. It was not to consist in the beatific vision, or seeing God as he is in himself by the supernatural light of glory, but in a reunion of friends, in the exercise of the social and benevolent affections, and the study of the natural sciences, in discovering the secrets of nature, and in admiring the beauty and harmony of the Creator's works. In its details it may differ from Mahomet's paradise, but hardly so in principle. Indeed there were

those among us who openly claimed the Mahometans as good Unitarians, and were quite disposed to fraternize with them. It need therefore surprise nobody that one of the most brilliant and gifted of the early Unitarian ministers of Boston actually did go to Turkey, turn Mahometan, and become a Moslem preacher. He published in English a volume of Mahometan sermons, which I once read. I thought them equal to most Unitarian sermons I had seen or heard. Even John Wesley, the founder of Methodism, thought Islamism an improvement on the Christianity of the Greeks of Constantinople.

There was evidently nothing shocking to the Unitarian mind in my regarding myself as the Precursor to the new Messias. Why should there not be new Messiases? Indeed, was not Kossuth, Vice-President of the American Bible Society, Ex-Governor of Hungary, when he came to this country a few years since, greeted, in so many words, as the "Second Messias," without a word of rebuke in public even from the so-called orthodox Protestant press? Did not Methodist schoolmasters in Cincinnati bring their young pupils to him that he might bless them? The truth is, I was quite modest in claiming for myself only the part of the Precursor, and many came to ask me if I was not myself a second Messias. The new moral world must have, of course, a great man, a representative man, to usher it in, to be its father and founder. If I had regarded myself as that man, and thus as superior, by all the difference between the first century and nineteenth, to the Founder of Christianity, it would have argued rather my low estimate of him than my high estimate of myself; and, in not doing so, I proved myself more modest than some who have come after me.

Not finding among my friends and acquaintances the "representative man," and waiting till he should reveal himself, I concluded to commence a direct preparation for his coming. One man, and one man only, shared my entire confidence, and knew my most secret thought. Him, from motives of delicacy, I do not name; but, in the formation of my mind, in systematizing my ideas, and in general development and culture, I owe more to him than to any other man among Protestants. We have since taken divergent courses, but I loved him as I have loved no other man, and shall so love and esteem him as long as I live. He encouraged me, and through him chiefly I was enable to remove to Boston

and commence operations. Dr. Channing and several of his personal friends, without knowing all my purposes, also assisted me. I was invited to Boston to preach to the laboring classes, and to do all I could to save them from the unbelief which had become quite prevalent among them. I accepted the invitation, proposing to myself to make of it an opportunity to bring out my religious and socialist theories, and to call public attention to the necessity of a new religious organization of mankind. I accordingly organized, on the first Sunday in July, 1836, "The Society for Christian Union and Progress."

The name I gave to the society was indicative of the principle of the future organization, and of the end I contemplated,—the union and progress of the race. I remained, with some interruption, the minister of this society till the latter part of 1843, when I began to suspect that man is an indifferent church-builder, and that God himself had already founded a church for us, some centuries ago, quite adequate to our wants, and adapted to our nature and destiny. My society at one time was prosperous, but in general I could not pride myself on my success; yet I saw clearly enough, that, with more confidence in myself, a firmer grasp of my own conviction, a stronger attachment to my own opinions because they were mine, and a more dogmatic temper than I possessed, I might easily succeed, not in founding a new Catholic Church indeed, but in founding a new sect, and perhaps a sect not without influence. But a new sect was not in my plan, and I took pains to prevent my movement from growing into one. What I wanted was, not sectarism, of which I felt we had had quite too much, but unity and catholicity. I wished to unite men, not to divide them—to put an end to divisions, not to multiply them.

The truth is, I was not, except on a few points, settled in my own mind. I never concealed, or affected to conceal, that I regarded myself as still a learner, a seeker after truth, not as one who has found the truth, and has nothing to do but to preach it. I always told my congregation that I was looking for more light, and that I could not be sure that my convictions would be to-morrow what they are to-day. Whether I preached or wrote, I aimed simply at exciting thought and directing it to the problems to be solved, not to satisfy the mind or furnish it with dogmatic solutions of its difficulties. I was often rash in my statements, because I regarded myself not as putting forth doc-

trines that must be believed, but as throwing out provocatives to thought and investigation. My confidence was not in the individual mind, whether my own or another's, but in humanity, in the action and decisions of the general mind, the universal reason.

I was perfectly consistent in this; and my course, I thought then, and I think now, was the only honest course for a man who has not an infallible authority to which he can appeal, and in the name of which he is commissioned to speak. If the criterion of truth is the universal reason, or the reason of all men, not my individual reason; and if I am imperfect and yet progressive, never knowing the whole truth, yet able to know more to-morrow than I know to-day, how can I, as an honest man, regard my private opinions as dogmas, or put forth my personal convictions, as so much eternal and immutable truth? What as yet the universal reason has not passed upon, what has not as yet received the seal of approbation from universal and immutable human nature, can be regarded only as private opinion, which I have no right to ask others to believe, or to assert as indisputable. I was in fact too honest, too consistent, and too distrustful of myself to succeed.

CHAPTER X.—MY "NEW VIEWS."

I wrote and published, immediately after organizing my society, a small work entitled, *New Views of Christianity, Society, and the Church*,* derived in great part from Benjamin Constant, Victor Cousin, Heinrich Heine, and the publications of the Saint-Simonians. It was designed to set forth the reasons which made a new church necessary, to assert the principles on which it must be founded or the end it must be established to effect, and to call attention to the signs of the times favorable to its speedy organization. The book made little sensation, and had few readers. It met with no success flattering to the pride or vanity of its author; yet the book is remarkable for its protest against Protestantism, and its laughable blunders as to the doctrines and tendencies of the Catholic Church, to which I was by no means hostile, but of which I was profoundly ignorant. It is no less remarkable for its acceptance and vindication, in principle, of nearly all the errors into which the human race has fallen. It is the last word of the non-Catholic

*Vol. IV., p. 1.

world, and marks the limit beyond which it cannot advance without recoiling.

In one respect, I misjudged my countrymen: they had less understanding of their Protestantism than I gave them credit for. They were unable to recognize their own thoughts in the general and abstract form in which I stated them. The truth, I suppose, is, that Protestants, with individual exceptions, seldom reason on their Protestantism, or take the trouble to analyze it and understand what it really is. They do not reduce it to its ultimate principles, and appreciate them in their real and essential character. Perhaps they are not capable of doing it; perhaps they are too busy with the world to attempt it; perhaps, also, they have a lurking suspicion, that, should they attempt it, they would find it disappearing in the process, and themselves reduced to the necessity of choosing between Catholicity and no-religion. There is no doubt that, if they are determined to be Protestants, they are wise. Few who have thoroughly analyzed Protestantism, thoroughly mastered its distinctive principles, have been able to retain their respect for it.

I found my countrymen more attached to the Protestant name and traditions, and more hostile to the Catholic Church, than I had supposed them. I could not understand why they should cling so tenaciously to a mere shadow, or pursue so unrelentingly the dead. For my part, I was no Catholic, should never be a Catholic, but I felt no hostility to Catholicity. It had been respectable in its day, had done good service to mankind for a thousand years, and was now dead and buried. Why war against it? Rather strew fresh flowers on its grave, and breathe over its mouldering ashes a *requiescat in pace*. For Protestantism, regarded as a religion, I had had, since my brief trial of Presbyterianism, no respect, no affection. All that it had of religion was borrowed from the church, and all it had of its own was simple negation. Undoubtedly it had, I conceded, been necessary in its time, when the work to be done was to demolish the old church; undoubtedly it had done good service as a destroying angel, in breaking the chains in which the papacy held the world, and in obtaining for the race the freedom to advance; but it had done its work, and was no longer justifiable or excusable. It had become mischievous, more mischievous than was Catholicity when Luther rose up against it. It could not command the intellect of the age, could not meet the wants of the heart, could not

aid or direct the progress of the race. It was a dissolvent, but no harmonizer. It split by its everlasting protests, criticisms, and negations, the race into divisions, but had no power to reunite them, and make them of one mind and one heart. As a religious institution, it was a sham, and no reality. It only disgusted men with the very name of religion, and drove every living man, every man of free thought and loving heart, into doubt, infidelity, atheism ; or chilled all his nobler feelings, rendering him indifferent to all elevated thought, or generous and noble deeds, and forced him to engross himself in the pursuit of wealth, or to seek dissipation in effeminating sensual pleasures.

As I recovered in some measure from my absolute unbelief, and saw and felt the necessity of religion as the agent of progress, I devoted myself to solving the problem of a religion which should be neither Protestantism nor Catholicity, but which should embody all that was true and holy in the latter, with the free spirit, the ideas and sentiments which had been developed by the former. I had studied the new philosophy of Cousin, and had seized firm hold of its eclectic feature,—the feature which at that time struck me with the most force. Other elements of M. Cousin's philosophy afterwards had more charm for me ; but when I first became acquainted with it in 1833, I knew little of metaphysics, and only attended to those things in the works I read, which I could appropriate to my purposes, or which I found solving, or appearing to solve, the problems with which I was more especially occupied.

For M. Cousin's ontology or his psychology, words of which I hardly understood the meaning, I cared little. Whether the method of philosophizing be intuitive or demonstrative ; whether we derive all our ideas through the senses, or have a noetic faculty by which we may attain directly the non-sensible world, was for me a matter of comparative indifference. I did not and could not study philosophy for its own sake. But the eclectic character of the system arrested my attention, and M. Cousin's assertion, that all systems are true in what they affirm, false only in what they deny, or only in that they are exclusive, set my head at work. If this is true in philosophy, it must be equally true in religious systems, and I immediately concluded with Leibnitz, though I knew not then that Leibnitz had so concluded, that all sects are right in what they affirm, false in what they deny or exclude. Examine all sects,

then, analyze them, get at the affirmative or positive principle of each, and mould, in the light of a higher unity, those principles into a uniform and harmonious whole, and you will have the pure truth without admixture of error. This is true, so far as it concerns truth of the natural order, or truth as a development of human nature; but it will not apply to supernatural revelation, and even to the natural order, only up to the present moment, if we assume the progressive development of mankind, and the progressive nature of truth itself. The former did not disturb me, for I had not yet attained to a belief in supernatural revelation properly so called, and I made allowance for the latter.

With my principle of eclecticism I proceeded to examine and ascertain the affirmative portion of Catholicity, and the affirmative portion of Protestantism. I began my book by asserting the theory, already developed, of the origin of religion in a sentiment natural to man, and the progressive nature of the forms with which man clothes it. Then I considered Catholicism as the first form which the religious sentiment assumed under Christianity. This form embodied the noblest sentiments and the most advanced intelligence of the age in which it originated, and served the race for a thousand years. But it was founded on an exclusive principle, and could not, therefore, answer for all times and all stages of human progress. I found, taking it as represented to me by Heine and the Saint-Simonians, that its principle was exclusive spiritualism, and the neglect or depression of the material order. It fitted men to die, but not to live; for heaven, but not for earth,—promising a heaven hereafter, but creating none here. Then I proceeded to Protestantism, and found it, as distinguished from Catholicism, based on exclusive materialism, and the depression or the denial of the spiritual. It takes care of this life, but neglects that which is to come; amasses material goods, but lays up no treasures in heaven; rehabilitates the flesh, but depresses the spirit; elevates humanity, but obscures the Divinity. It is in principle the revival of Greek and Roman heathenism, and has culminated in the worship of a prostitute as the goddess of reason, and the conversion of the church into the pantheon, as in the French revolution of 1789. Each system is wrong in what it excludes, and each is right in what it affirms. What is wanted is the union of the two in all that they have that is affirmative. And this union of Catholicism and Protestantism, of spiritualism and material-

ism, or spirit and matter, was what I meant by *union* in the name of my society, and I asserted union as the condition of progress. As separate systems, both had exhausted their energies, and accomplished all they could for mankind, and the time had come for the union of the two, the spiritual and the material, the heavenly and the earthly, the eternal and the temporal, the divine and the human, realizing the idea of the God-man, asserted by the Christian dogma; and their embodiment in an outward organization of mankind, which should secure to each full play for its activity in harmony with the other. Thus we should provide alike for soul and body at one and the same time, get rid of that dualism which has hitherto rent asunder both the individual and society, and been the source of life's tragedy, and restore love, harmony, peace, in the bosom of each,—the realization of the atonement, or the reconciliation.

How this union was to be affected outwardly, or what would be the precise form of this new organization, I did not clearly perceive, or pretend to be able to determine. The idea must go before its embodiment. My mission was not to effect the organization, but to develop and set forth the idea. Once get men fairly imbued with the idea, in love with it, convinced of its truth, and anxious for its external realization, and the great man will appear, who, having realized it internally for himself, will realize it externally for the world,—a new Moses, a new Christ.

Wild, visionary, and absurd as all this may seem, it is nothing but a statement of the common belief of my non-Catholic countrymen. Protestantism in its origin pretended to be a return to the truth and simplicity of primitive Christianity, and a few Protestants, who are simply men of routine, may pretend the same even yet; but these are the old fogies of the Protestant world, and do not carry the age or the country with them. Protestantism is defended to-day as an advance on Catholicity in Christian truth and knowledge, and the church is condemned as stationary, as inflexible, inexpansive, and neither advancing herself, nor permitting mankind to advance. She is denounced as behind the age, as not up with the times, and as bent on keeping men back in the narrow ideas, the ignorance and superstition, of the Dark Ages. She is condemned as being hostile to material civilization, as neglecting the body, as demanding the crucifixion of the flesh, as insisting on penance, mortification, and detachment from the world. Prot-

estantism, on the other hand, is lauded as a progressive religion, a religion that allows full scope to human activity, that aids men forward in material progress, encourages industry, thrift, commerce, manufactures, enterprise, invents steamboats, railroads, lightning telegraphs, and makes all nature contribute to the earthly well-being of man. Are we not every day reminded of the alleged material superiority of Protestant nations to Catholic nations, as a proof of the truth of Protestantism, and of the falsity and mischievousness of Catholicity? There is no denying it.

Again, is it not the constant effort of all Protestants, who retain a sense of religion, to unite in their church the human and the divine, the earthly and the heavenly, the material and the spiritual, the temporal and the eternal,—to combine their love of the world with the love of God, and to find out an easier way to get to heaven than by penance, mortification, self-denial, and detachment from the world? Everybody, up to the intelligence of the age, knows that it is so, and concedes it.

With regard to the church, the great mass of my non-Catholic countrymen hold that it was divine only in the sense that the idea around which it is formed, and which it seeks to embody, was divinely revealed. They nearly all hold with Guizot, that "Christianity came into the world a naked idea," a doctrine, and operating as such in men's minds and hearts, has led them to form and organize the church. Even the mass of Episcopalians, approaching nearer to church views than any other sect at present among us, take the church from the doctrine, not the doctrine from the church. The whole tendency of the age is to regard religion as the development of man, of his higher nature, and the church as the outward expression of the inward thought. This is the doctrine taught by the leading Protestant minds of France, Germany, Great Britain, and the United States. Even those who the most distinctly assert divine revelation, regard it as quickening thought and aiding its development, rather than as teaching any distinct, formal, objective doctrines. I was, then, really only up to the level of Protestantism, and in principle did not differ essentially from my Protestant contemporaries. I drew, perhaps, conclusions where they drew none and held themselves in suspense.

My views were hardly new or singular; but the manner in which they were received was instructive, and satisfied

me that my Protestant countrymen, though disclaiming all authority in matters of belief, and professing to discard all authoritative tradition, were little accustomed, except in worldly affairs, to free, independent, distinct thought. For the most part, their belief, I found, was practically a prejudice. They had never thought out their doctrines, and they took them merely on trust, and that, too, without even troubling themselves to inquire whether they accorded or not with what they held to be the principles of reason. They held all my views, though mixed up with much extraneous and contradictory matter. Yet they recoiled, or affected to recoil, with horror from my statements, and bespattered me with cant phrases and epithets, to which, I presume, not one in ten attached any definite meaning; and, of those who did attach such meaning, not one in a hundred believed it, or was not prepared in the next breath to contradict it.

I was convinced that I had gone too fast for the public, and that there remained a greater preliminary work to be done than I had supposed. To effect something in regard to this preliminary work, I established, in January, 1838, a Quarterly Review, which I conducted almost single-handed for five years, and in 1840 published *Charles Elwood; or, The Infidel Converted*,* a philosophico-religious work, strung together on a slight thread of fiction. My *Quarterly Review* was devoted to religion, philosophy, politics, and general literature. It had no creed, no distinct doctrines to support on any subject whatever, and was intended for free and independent discussion of all questions which I might regard as worth discussing, not, however, with a view of settling them, or putting an end to any dispute. I had purposes to accomplish, but not, and I did not profess to have, a body of truth I wished to bring out and make prevail. My aim was not dogmatism, but inquiry; and my more immediate purpose was to excite thought, to quicken the mental activity of my countrymen, and force them to think freely and independently on the gravest and most delicate subjects. I aimed to startle, and made it a point to be as paradoxical and as extravagant as I could, without doing violence to my own reason and conscience. Whoever reads the five volumes of that *Review*, nearly all written by myself, with the view of finding clear, distinct, and consistent doctrines on any subject, with the exception of certain

* Vol. IV., p. 173.

political questions, will be disappointed ; but whoever reads it to find provocatives to thought, stimulants to inquiry, and valuable hints on a great variety of important topics, will probably be satisfied. I did what I aimed to do, effected my purpose, and, though its circulation was limited, its influence was such as to satisfy me. The *Review* should be judged by the purpose for which it was instituted, not merely by the speculations it contains. Many of them, no doubt, are crude, rash, and thrown out with a certain recklessness which nothing, if I had aimed to dogmatize, could justify, but as designed simply to set other minds to thinking, may, perhaps, escape any great severity of censure.

None of my countrymen are less disposed to accept entire the speculations, theories, and utterances of that *Quarterly Review*, than I am, and yet I believe it deserves an honorable mention in the history of American literature ; and the opinions it enunciates, on a great variety of topics are substantially such as I still hold on the same topics. On other points I should have been right if my facts had been true. It will be generally found, to speak after the manner of logicians, that my *major* was sound, but my *minor* often needed to be denied, or distinguished. There is much in these volumes, especially the later ones, to indicate that my mind did not remain stationary, that I was beginning to look in the direction of the Catholic Church, and that I had, after all, less to change on becoming a Catholic than was commonly supposed at the time. The public read me more or less, but hardly knew what to make of me. They regarded me as a bold and vigorous writer, but as eccentric, extravagant, paradoxical, constantly changing, and not to be counted on ; not perceiving that I did not wish to be counted on, in their sense, as a leader whom they could safely follow, and who would save them the labor of thinking for themselves. My aim was to induce, to force others to think for themselves, not to persuade them to permit me to do their thinking for them. This aim was just and proper in one who knew he had no authority to teach.

CHAPTER XI.—SAINT-SIMONISM.

If I drew my doctrine of union in part from the eclecticism of Cousin, I drew my views of the church and of the reorganization of the race from the Saint-Simonians,—a philosophico-religious, or a politico-philosophical sect that sprung up in France under the Restoration, and figured

largely for a year or two under the monarchy of July. Their founder was Claude Henri, Count de Saint-Simon, a descendant of the Duc de Saint-Simon, well known as the author of the *Memoirs*. He was born in 1760, entered the army at the age of seventeen, and the year after came to this country, where he served with distinction in our revolutionary war, under Bouillé. After the peace of 1783, he devoted two years to the study of our people and institutions, and then returned to France. Hardly had he returned before he found himself in the midst of the French revolution, which he regarded as the practical application of the principles or theories adopted by the reformers of the sixteenth century, and popularized by the philosophers of the eighteenth. He looked upon that revolution, we are told, as having only a destructive mission, necessary, important, but inadequate to the wants of humanity; and instead of being carried away by it, as were most of the young men of his age and his principles, he set himself at work to amass materials for the erection of a new social edifice on the ruins of the old, which should stand and improve in solidity, strength, grandeur, and beauty forever.

The way he seems to have taken to amass these materials was to engage with a partner in some grand speculations for the accumulation of wealth, and speculations too, it is said, not of the most honorable, or even the most honest, character. His plans succeeded for a time, and he became very rich, as did many others in those troublous times; but he finally met with reverses, and lost all but the wrecks of his fortune. He then for a number of years plunged into all manner of vice, and indulged to excess in every species of dissipation, not, we are told, from love of vice, any inordinate desire, or any impure affection; but for the holy purpose of preparing himself by his experience for the great work of redeeming man, and securing for him a paradise on earth. Having gained all that experience could give him in the department of vice, he then proceeded to consult the learned professors of *l'Ecole Polytechnique* for seven or ten years, to make himself master of science, literature, and the fine arts in all their departments, and to place himself at the level of the last attainments of the race. Thus qualified to be the founder of a new social organization, he wrote several books, in which he deposited the germs of his ideas, or rather the germs of the future, and most of which have hitherto remained unpublished.

But now that he was so well qualified for this work, he found himself a beggar, and had as yet made only a single disciple. He was reduced to despair, and attempted to take his own life; but failed, the ball only grazing his sacred forehead. His faithful disciple was near him, saved him, and aroused him into life and hope. When he recovered, he found that he had fallen into a gross error. He had been a materialist, an atheist, and had discarded all religious ideas as long since outgrown by the human race. He had proposed to organize the human race with materials furnished by the senses alone, and by the aid of positive science. He owns his fault, and conceives and brings forth a new Christianity, consigned to a small pamphlet entitled *Nouveau Christianisme*, which was immediately published. This done, his mission was ended, and he died May 19, 1825, and I suppose was buried.

Saint-Simon, the preacher of a new Christianity, very soon attracted disciples, chiefly from the pupils of the polytechnic school, ardent and lively young men, full of enthusiasm, brought up without faith in the Gospel, and yet unable to live without religion of some sort. Among the active members of the sect were at one time Pierre Leroux, Jules and Michel Chevalier, Lerminier, and my personal friend, Dr. Poyen, who initiated me and so many others in New England into the mysteries of animal magnetism. Dr. Poyen was, I believe, a native of the island of Guadeloupe, a man of more ability than he usually had credit for, of solid learning, genuine science, and honest intentions. I knew him well, and esteemed him highly. When I knew him, his attachment to the new religion was much weakened; and he often talked to me of the old church, and assured me that he felt at times that he must return to her bosom. I owe him many hints which turned my thoughts towards Catholic principles, and which, with God's grace, were of much service to me. These and many others were in the sect, whose chiefs, after the death of its founder, were Bazard, a liberal, and a practical man, who killed himself, and Enfantin, who, after the dissolution of the sect, sought employment in the service of the Viceroy of Egypt, and occupies now some important post in connection with the French railways.

The sect began in 1826, by addressing the working classes, but their success was small. In 1829 they came out of their narrow circle, assumed a bolder tone, addressed themselves to the general public, and became in less than eighteen

months a Parisian *mode*. In 1831 they purchased the *Globe* newspaper, made it their organ, and distributed gratuitously five thousand copies daily. In 1832 they had established a central propagandism in Paris, and had their missionaries in most of the departments of France. They attacked the hereditary peerage, and it fell; they seemed to be numerous and strong, and I believed for a moment in their complete success. They called their doctrine a religion, their ministers priests, and their organization a church; and as such they claimed to be recognized by the state, and to receive from it a subvention as other religious denominations. But the courts decided that Saint-Simonism was not a religion, and its ministers were not religious teachers. This decision struck them with death. Their prestige vanished. They scattered, dissolved in thin air, and went off, as Carlyle would say, into endless vacuity, as do sooner or later all shams and unrealities.

Saint-Simon himself, who, as presented to us by his disciples, is a half mythic personage, seems, so far as I can judge by those of his writings that I have seen, to have been a man of large ability and laudable intentions; but I have not been able to find any new or original thoughts of which he was the indisputable father. His whole system, if system he had, is summed up in the two maxims: "Eden is before us, not behind us," or the golden age of the poets is in the future, not in the past; and, "Society ought to be so organized as to tend in the most rapid manner possible to the continuous moral, intellectual, and physical amelioration of the poorer and more numerous classes." He simply adopts the doctrine of progress set forth with so much flash eloquence by Condorcet, and the philanthropic doctrine with regard to the laboring classes, or the people, defended by Barbeuf, and a large section of the French revolutionists. His religion was not so much as the theophilanthropy attempted to be introduced by some members of the French Directory. It admitted God in name, and in name did not deny Jesus Christ, but it rejected all mysteries, and reduced religion to mere socialism. It conceded that Catholicity had been the true church down to the pontificate of Leo X., because down to that time its ministers had taken the lead in directing the intelligence and labors of mankind, had aided the progress of civilization, and promoted the well-being of the poorer and more numerous classes. But since Leo X., who made of the papacy a secular principality, it had neglected its mis-

sion, had ceased to labor for the poorer and more numerous classes, had leagued itself with the ruling orders, and lent all its influence to uphold tyrants and tyranny. A new church was needed,—a church which should realize the ideal of Jesus Christ, and tend directly and constantly to the moral, physical, and social amelioration of the poorer and more numerous classes; in other words, the greatest happiness in this life of the greatest number: the principle of Jeremy Bentham and his utilitarian school.

His disciples enlarged upon the hints of the master, and attributed to him ideas which he never entertained. They endeavored to reduce his hints to a complete system of religion, philosophy, and social organization. Their chiefs, I have said, were Bazard and Enfantin. Amand Bazard was born in Paris in 1791, and at the age of twenty-two married the daughter of Joubert the Conventionalist. He was a rigid republican, and the principal founder of the French Carbonari. He held an eminent rank in the French secret societies, was Venerable of the lodge of the *Amis de la Vérité*, and after the foundation of the Carbonari was President of the Haute Vente, and of the Vente Suprême, and most of the orders circulated in the association were from him. He was the life and soul of nearly all the movements, plots, and conspiracies in behalf of republicanism under the Restoration. He was in those times, though less before the public, very much what Mazzini is in ours. In October, 1825, he became acquainted with the little band of disciples left by Saint-Simon, and joined himself to them, and was the ablest and most competent man, so far as it regards external organization and direction, the sect ever had. He was a politician, a revolutionist, and stamped his own character on the school.

Barthélemy Prosper Enfantin, the son of a banker, born at Paris 1796, was a man of a different stamp, better fitted for thinking, or rather dreaming, than acting. Bazard evidently adopted Saint-Simonism as an instrument to be used, or as an engine which he hoped to use, in accomplishing his own political and social purposes; Enfantin appears to have really believed in the mission of his master, and to have entered sincerely, with all his soul, into his new religion. He was endowed with rare philosophical genius, was of a contemplative turn of mind, and of great natural religious fervor. He was firm, conscientious, and would for no prospect of gain or the success of his sect, make the slightest compromise of principle, or sacrifice a single iota of what

he held to be right. Had he been a Catholic, he would have suffered martrydom, or been a saint whom the faithful would have delighted to hold in honor through all ages. As it was, he was too scrupulous to make the compromises necessary for success in a scheme that could not afford to be honest; and the larger portion of his associates regarded him as a bigot, a fanatic, and laid the blame of their divisions and failures to his obstinacy; to what I should call his sincerity, firmness, and consistency.

These two men elaborated the Saint-Simonian doctrine and the Saint-Simonian religion. Bazard took the lead in what related to the external, political, and economical organization, and Enfantin, in what regarded doctrine and worship. The philosophy or theology of the sect or school was derived principally from Hegel, and was a refined pantheism. Its Christology was the unity, not union, of the divine and human; and the Incarnation symbolized the unity of God and man, or the Divinity manifesting himself in humanity, and making humanity substantially divine: the very doctrine, in reality, which I myself had embraced, even before I had heard of the Saint-Simonians, if not before they had published it. The religious organization was founded on the doctrine of the progressive nature of man, and the maxim that all institutions should tend in the most speedy and direct manner possible to the constant amelioration of the moral, intellectual, and physical condition of the poorer and more numerous classes. Socially men were to be divided into three classes, artists, *savants*, and industrials, or working men, corresponding to the psychological division of the human faculties. The soul has three powers or faculties: to love, to know, and to act. Those in whom the love-faculty is predominant, belong to the class of artists; those in whom the knowledge-faculty is predominant, belong to the class of *savants*, the scientific and the learned; and, in fine, those in whom the act-faculty predominates, belong to the industrial class. This classification places every man in the social category for which he is fitted, and to which he is attracted by his nature. These several classes are to be hierarchically organized, under chiefs or priests, who are respectively priests of the artists, of the scientific, and of the industrials, and are, priests and all, to be subjected to a supreme father, *père suprême*, and a supreme mother, *mère suprême*.

The economical organization is to be based on the maxims, "To each one according to his capacity," and, "To each

capacity according to its work." Private property is to be retained, but its transmission by inheritance or testamentary disposition must be abolished. The property is to be held by a tenure resembling that of gavelkind. It belongs to the community, and the priests, chiefs, or brehons, as the Celtic tribes call them, are to distribute it for life to individuals, and "to each individual according to his capacity." It was supposed that in this way the advantages of both common and individual property might be secured. Something of this prevailed originally in most nations, and a reminiscence of it still exists in the village system among the Sklavonic tribes of Russia and Poland; and nearly all jurists maintain that the testamentary right, by which a man disposes of his goods after his natural death, as well as that by which a child inherits from the parent, is a municipal, not a natural right.

The most striking feature in the Saint-Simonian scheme was the rank and position it assigned to woman. It asserted the absolute equality of the sexes, and maintained that either sex is incomplete without the other. Man is an incomplete individual without woman. Hence a religion, a doctrine, a social institution, founded by one sex alone, is incomplete, and can never be adequate to the wants of the race or a definitive order. This idea was also entertained by Frances Wright, and appears to be entertained by all our women's rights folk of either sex. The old civilization was masculine, not male and female as God made man. Hence its condemnation. The Saint-Simonians, therefore, proposed to place by the side of their sovereign father, at the summit of their hierarchy, a sovereign mother. The man to be sovereign father they found, but a woman to be sovereign mother, *mère suprême*, they found not. This caused great embarrassment, and a split between Bazard and Enfantin. Bazard was about marrying his daughter, and he proposed to place her marriage under the protection of the existing French laws. Enfantin opposed his doing so, and called it a sinful compliance with the prejudices of the world. The Saint-Simonian society, he maintained, was a state, a kingdom within itself, and should be governed by its own laws and its own chiefs without any recognition of those without. Bazard persisted, and had the marriage of his daughter solemnized in a legal manner, and for aught I know, according to the rites of the church. A great scandal followed. Bazard charged Enfantin with denying Christian marriage, and with holding loose notions on the subject. Enfantin replied that

he neither denied nor affirmed Christian marriage; that, in enacting the existing law on the subject, man alone had been consulted, and he could not recognize it as law till woman had given her consent to it. As yet the society was only provisionally organized, inasmuch as they had not yet found the *mère suprême*. The law on marriage must emanate conjointly from the supreme father and the supreme mother, and it would be irregular and a usurpation for the supreme father to undertake alone to legislate on the subject. Bazard would not submit, and went out and shot himself. Most of the politicians abandoned the association, and Père Enfantin, almost in despair, despatched twelve apostles to Constantinople to find in the Turkish harems the supreme mother. After a year they returned and reported that they were unable to find her; and the society, condemned by the French courts as immoral, broke up,—and broke up because no woman could be found to be its mother: and so they ended, having risen, flourished, and decayed in less than a single decade.

The points in the Saint-Simonian movement that arrested my attention, and commanded my belief, were what it will seem strange to my readers could ever have been doubted, its assertion of a religious future for the human race, and that religion, in the future as well as in the past, must have an organization, and a hierarchical organization. Its classification of men according to the predominant psychological faculty in each, into artists, *savants*, and industrials, struck me as very well; and the maxims, "To each according to his capacity," and, "To each capacity according to its works," as evidently just and desirable, if practicable. The doctrine of the divinity in humanity, of progress, of no essential antagonism between the spiritual and the material, and of the duty of shaping all institutions for the speediest and continuous moral, intellectual, and physical amelioration of the poorer and more numerous classes, I already held. I was rather pleased than otherwise with the doctrine with regard to property, and thought it a decided improvement on that of a community of goods. The doctrine with regard to the relation of the sexes, I rather acquiesced in than approved. I was disposed to maintain, as the Indian said, that "woman is the weaker canoe," and to assert my marital prerogatives; but the equality of the sexes was asserted by nearly all my friends, and I remained generally silent on the subject, till some of the admirers of Harriet Martineau and of Margaret

Fuller began to scorn equality and to claim for woman superiority. Then I became roused, and ventured to assert my masculine dignity.

It is remarkable that most reformers find fault with the Christian law of marriage, and propose to alter the relations which God has established both in nature and the Gospel between the sexes; and this is generally the rock on which they split. Women do not usually admire men who cast off their manhood, or are unconscious of the rights and prerogatives of the stronger sex; and they admire just as little those "strong-minded women," who strive to excel only in the masculine virtues. I have never been persuaded that it argues well for a people when its women are men, and its men women. Yet, I trust I have always honored and always shall honor woman. I raise no question as to woman's equality or inequality with man, for comparisons cannot be made between things not of the same kind. Woman's sphere and office in life are as high, as holy, as important as man's, but different; and the glory of both man and woman is for each to act well the part assigned to each by Almighty God.

The Saint-Simonian writings made me familiar with the idea of a hierarchy, and removed from my mind the prejudices against the papacy generally entertained by my countrymen. Their proposed organization I saw might be good and desirable, if their priests, their supreme father and mother, could really be the wisest, the best,—not merely nominal, but the real chiefs of society. Yet what security have I that they will be? Their power was to have no limit save their own wisdom and love: but who would answer for it that these would always be an effectual limit? How were these priests or chiefs to be designated and installed in their office? By popular election? But popular election often passes over the proper man, and takes the improper. Then as to the assignment to each man of a capital proportioned to his capacity to begin life with, what certainty is there that the rules of strict right will be followed? that wrong will not often be done both voluntarily and involuntarily? Are your chiefs to be infallible and impeccable? Still the movement interested me, and many of its principles took firm hold of me, and held me for years in a species of mental thraldom, inasmuch as I found it difficult, if not impossible, either to refute them or to harmonize them with other principles which I also held, or, rather, which held me, and in which I detected no

unsoundness. Yet I imbibed no errors from the Saint-Simonians, and I can say of them as of the Unitarians, they did me no harm, but were, in my fallen state, the occasion of much good to me.

CHAPTER XII.—HORRIBLE DOCTRINES.

The Saint-Simonians asserted a new Christianity. I held that their new Christianity was not new, and that it was only a just interpretation of the old Christianity as it lay in the mind of its Author. This was my chief point of difference from them. They asserted a religious future for mankind, and so did I. They asserted the necessity of a new religious institution or organization of society, and so did I. They maintained that the object or end of this new institution should be the amelioration, moral, intellectual, and physical, of the poorer and more numerous classes, or the creation of a heaven upon earth for all men, and so did I. But, as to the practical means of realizing this end, I had my doubts and misgivings.

I had come to the conclusion that the amelioration of the laboring classes could not be effected by themselves alone, or by appealing solely to them. It could be effected only by the coöperation of all classes of society, or, as I said, not without a slight touch of mysticism in my thought, the coöperation of the race. The organization of the race in a manner to secure this end, was what I meant by the new church.

The Christian thought, as it existed in the mind of Jesus of Nazareth, I maintained, was coincident with democracy. His kingdom was to be set up in this world; his mission was to establish the reign of justice and love on the earth. He claimed to have come from God, because his mission was to the poor and oppressed. "The Spirit of the Lord," he said, "is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach glad tidings to the poor, to heal them that are bruised, to bind up the broken-hearted, to set the captives free." To the disciples of John the Baptist, sent to ask him whether he was the Messias promised, or whether they were to look for another, he said: "Go tell your master, the poor have the Gospel preached unto them." He declared the poor blessed, heirs of his kingdom, and pronounced a woe upon the rich, declaring it "easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of heaven." He rebuked all cant, sham, or make-

believe goodness, and declared to the Scribes and the Pharisees, the saints of his day, that publicans and harlots would enter into the kingdom of heaven before them. He discarded all the titles and distinctions created by human pride and vanity, recognized no earth-born nobilities, no pomp of rank or earthly majesty, but looked on simple naked humanity, and accepted and honored man for his real or intrinsic worth. He loved man as man, and died for his redemption. The great law of his religion was love of man. "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye love one another." "A new commandment give I unto you, that ye love one another." "We know," said his beloved disciple, "that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." Nor was this love to be confined to one's own family, friends, or nation. We were to love our enemies, and bless them that curse us, do good to them that hate us. We must love our neighbor as ourselves, and count every man our neighbor to whom we can be of service, as was the Samaritan to the Jew who fell among thieves. Jesus proclaimed the worth of man as man, taught the great law of love, and proposed the universal brotherhood of the race,—liberty, equality, fraternity: the noble device of the democratic banner.

Here was that Christian democracy, as I called it, which constituted the substance of my preaching for ten or eleven years. I was not alone in this. It was substantially the doctrine of Dr. Channing, and that section of the Unitarians that took him for their leader; and it was held more or less distinctly by the whole movement party of the time, in both Europe and America. It had a powerful champion in the unhappy Abbé de La Mennais, both before and after his excommunication by Gregory XVI., and was maintained by all the leading liberals of the European continent. Indeed, it had penetrated very widely even into the Catholic camp, and in 1848 we found in France even priests ready to assert the identity of democracy and Christianity; and some, I believe, went so far as to call our blessed Lord the first democrat, as in the old French revolution individuals were found to call him the great *Sans Culotte*, and to speak of him as *le Citoyen Christ*. Even the pious and philosophical Rosmini seemed, in his work on the *Five Wounds of the Church*, to look towards it; and many of the Italian clergy who favored the republican revolution which compelled the flight of the Holy Father from Rome to Gaëta, held it. It

can be detected, in some of its phases, in Padre Ventura's famous Funeral Oration on Daniel O'Connell. It is, as the Cardinal Archbishop of Rheims has well remarked, "the great heresy of the nineteenth century." It is not singular, then, that I, believing in progress, and therefore regarding the latest thought as the truest and best, should have adopted it.

The doctrine, moreover, is not without its side of truth, especially as I defended it. Democracy, in the sense I defined and defended it, regarded the end for which government should be constituted and administered, rather than the origin and form of the government itself. I never myself held the doctrine of the native underived sovereignty of the people. When I believed in no God, I believed in no government; for I could never understand why the people collectively should not be under law as well as the people distributively. I always said with St. Paul, *Non est potestas nisi a Deo.* When I renounced my atheism, I derived all power from God, the source of all law and of all justice. I might, and probably did, even as I do now, derive it from God through the people, as the medial origin of government, and thus accept Mr. Bancroft's definition, that "Democracy is eternal justice ruling through the people;" but the popular doctrine which puts the people in the place of God, and asserts not only people-king, but people-god, I never held, and it is one of the few errors of my times into which I have never fallen. I had to combat the people too often. I had to make too frequent war on popular prejudice and popular errors, to believe that whatever is popular is true, right, and just. I had found majorities too often in the wrong, to believe them either infallible or impeccable. Did not the people, the majority, condemn Socrates to drink hemlock? Did not the people cry out against one greater than Socrates, "Crucify him, crucify him"? And did not the majority actually crucify him between two thieves?

But democracy as designating the end of government, I did hold; that is, I held that government should be constituted and administered for the common good of the governed as men, irrespective of the accidents of rank, birth, position, or condition. This I held, and hold still. This is the simple dictate of reason or the law of nature, and is the common doctrine of all the doctors of the church in all ages and nations. All governments not constituted and administered for the common good of the governed, are ille-

gitimate, whatever their form or historical origin, and are unable to bind the consciences of their subjects. Hence, the church has always inclined to the side of the poorer and more numerous classes, and has always treated with disfavor, and in her own sphere has never recognized, the privileges and privileged orders introduced and sustained by the feudal system. She treats men as men, and admits, in her dealing with them, no noble or ignoble classes. She has one law of justice, one and the same office and discipline for the prince and the peasant, the noble and the plebeian, the lord and the vassal, the rich and the poor, the master and the slave. In this sense, the church, Christianity, is democratic, and the law of nature, also, is democratic: and it was in this sense that I defined democracy to be "the supremacy of man over his accidents:" that is, it imposes on government the obligation to consult the good of man as man, irrespective of the accidents of birth, wealth, rank, position, or condition.

In this sense only did I ever profess to be a democrat, and in this sense I am a democrat now, though I dislike the term, and disclaimed it as long ago as 1841. The proper term is *republican*, which designates any government, whatever its form, that is constituted and administered in sole reference to the public good, or the good of the governed in distinction from the private good of the governors. Whether the democratic form, such as is demanded by modern liberals and revolutionists, be or be not the form best adapted to secure the public good, is an open question, which admits of much being said on both sides. Probably, there are no two countries in Christendom so little favorable to the poorer and more numerous classes, or in which wealth has so much influence, and it is so great a misfortune to be poor, as Great Britain and the United States. They do not, as the ancient heathen nations did, actually kill their poor or sell them into slavery, but they despise, abhor them, shut them up in work-houses, and treat them as criminals. Democratic, or democratically inclined governments are for the most part cruel and hard-hearted. Like corporations they have no souls, and are incapable of tenderness. They have their advantages, but also their disadvantages, and probably are less favorable to public prosperity than is commonly imagined.

I found my countrymen attached to democracy in the sense that the people are the original source of all power, sovereign, as *The Democratic Review* expressed it, "in

their own native might and right." In this sense, democracy has its expression in universal suffrage and eligibility. But in this sense, I said, it is a bitter mockery, if the people are not practically equal as individuals. Political equality may be a blessed thing; but, to be real, any thing more than a delusion, it must rest for its basis on social equality: equality in wealth, position, education, ability, influence. Man against man and money is not an equal match. Man ignorant, rude, uncultivated, cannot enter into the political contest on equal terms with the educated, the cultivated man, with all the advantages society can give him. How pretend that you and I are equal, when you can influence a thousand votes, while I can hardly control my own, unless I have the spirit of a martyr? The immense majority of American voters vote with no real will or independence of their own. A few individuals contrive to manage the people, and some two or three hundred more determine even our national elections, and the politics of the country.

If, then, you will have democracy, if you insist on the democratic form, have the courage to go further, and the good-sense to adopt the measures necessary to prevent your universal suffrage and eligibility from being a mere sham. You must do more than you have done; you must establish and maintain the substantial equality of conditions, so that not merely the *rights*, but the *mights*, of men shall be equal. With this thought, I wrote and published in my *Review* for July, 1840, an essay on the Laboring Classes, which had a louder echo than I had counted on. It was published during the heat of the presidential electioneering campaign, and I was regarded at that time as a prominent member of the Democratic party. The Whig, or opposing party, seized it, reprinted it, and circulated it by thousands, if not by hundreds of thousands, for the purpose of damaging the party with which I was connected. I was denounced in the press, from the pulpit and the rostrum. My friends shook their heads, and were very sorry that I had been so imprudent; and not a voice was raised in my defence, or in mitigation of the censure with which I was visited. The Democratic journals threw me overboard, and defended themselves as well as they could; by disowning me, and declaring it unfair and unjust to hold the party responsible for my eccentricities and extravagances.

The doctrines of my essay were received by my countrymen with one universal scream of horror, partly affected, no

doubt, for party purposes, but partly real and sincere. There was no question that I had gone beyond the point the public could be induced to go with me. Yet I had only drawn from the democratic and Protestant principles, which I had never heard questioned from my youth up, their legitimate consequences; I had only drawn from the premises supplied by the dominant public opinion, their strictly logical conclusions. I felt the blame, if blame there was in the case, was not mine. If my Protestant and democratic countrymen said, "Two and two," wherefore could it be wrong for me to add, "make four"? With Protestantism I denied the church and the priesthood; and with the democracy I denied the distinction of classes, of castes, of noble and ignoble, and asserted the political equality of all men. I added only a change in the transmission and distribution of property to the new generation, necessary to render political equality a practical fact, a reality, not an illusion. What sin against either had I committed?

The essay was an honest, undisguised, fearless, and not ineloquent expression of thoughts which had been fermenting in my mind, and pressing for years for utterance. In it I poured out my soul, such as it was, and kept nothing back. I made my confession to the world, a clean breast of it; and I think my convalescence dates from that moment. But I can hardly read the essay over without being myself shocked, and wondering at my temerity in publishing it. Yet never did I speak more truly my honest thought, or more consistently with myself. Place me where I stood then; place me outside of the Catholic Church, and make me regard that church as exclusive, as a spiritual tyranny, as all my Protestant countrymen maintain she is, and give me faith only in progress by the natural forces of man, and I would to-day repeat and indorse every paragraph and every word I then wrote.

"Mankind," I wrote, "came out of the savage state by means of the priests. Priests are the first civilizers of the race. For the wild freedom of the savage they substitute the iron despotism of the theocrat. This is the first step in civilization, in man's career of progress. It is not strange, then, that some should prefer the savage to the civilized state. Who would not rather roam the forest, with a free step and unshackled limb, though exposed to hunger, cold, and nakedness, than crouch an abject slave beneath the whip of the master? As yet civilization has done little more than

break and subdue man's natural love of freedom,—than tame his wild and eagle spirit. In what a world does man even now find himself, when he first awakes and feels some of the workings of his manly nature? He is in a cold, damp, dark dungeon, and loaded all over with chains, with the iron eating into his soul. He cannot make one single free movement. The priest holds his conscience, fashion controls his tastes, and society with her forces invades the very sanctuary of his heart, and takes command of his love, that which is purest and best in his nature, which alone gives reality to his existence, and from which proceeds the only ray that pierces the gloom of his prison-house. Even that he cannot enjoy in peace and quietness, hardly at all. He is wounded on every side, in every part of his being, in every relation in life, in every idea of his mind, in every sentiment of his heart. Oh, it is a sad world, a sad world to the young heart just awakening to its diviner instincts! A sad world to him who is not gifted with the only blessing which seems compatible with life as it is,—absolute insensibility. But no matter. A wise man never murmurs. He never kicks against the pricks. What is is, and there is an end of it; what can be may be, and we will do what we can to make life what it ought to be. Though man's first step in civilization is slavery, his last step shall be freedom. The free soul can never be wholly subdued; the ethereal fire in man's nature may be smothered, but it cannot be extinguished. Down, down, deep in the centre of the heart, it burns inextinguishable and forever, glowing intenser with the accumulating heat of centuries; and one day the whole mass of humanity shall become ignited, be full of fire within and all over as a live coal; and then—slavery, and whatever is foreign to the soul itself, shall be consumed.

"But, having traced the inequality we complain of, to its source, we ask again, What is the remedy? The remedy is to be sought first in the destruction of the priest. We are not mere destructives. We delight not in pulling down; but the bad must be removed before the good can be introduced. Conviction and repentance precede regeneration. Moreover, we are Christians, and it is only by following out the Christian law and the example of the early Christians, that we can hope to effect any thing. Christianity is the sublimest protest against the priesthood ever uttered, and a protest uttered by both God and man, for he who uttered it was God-man. In the person of Jesus, both God and man

protest against the priesthood. What was the mission of Jesus but a solemn summons of every priesthood on earth to judgment, and of the human race to freedom? He discomfited the learned doctors, and with whips made of small cords drove the priests, degenerated into money-changers, from the temple of God. He instituted himself no priesthood, no form of religious worship. He recognized no priest but a holy life, and commanded the construction of no temple but that of the pure heart. He preached no formal religion, enjoined no creed, set apart no day for religious worship. He preached fraternal love, peace on earth, and good-will to men. He came to the soul enslaved, 'cabined, cribbed, confined,' to the poor child of mortality, bound hand and foot, unable to move, and said in the tones of a God, 'Be free, be enlarged, be there room for thee to grow, and expand, and overflow with love.'

"In the name of Jesus, we admit, there has been a priesthood instituted, and, considering how the world went, a priesthood could not but be instituted; but the religion of Jesus repudiates it. It recognizes no mediator between God and men but him who died on the cross to redeem man; no propitiation for sin but a pure love which rises in a living flame to all that is beautiful and good, and spreads out in light and warmth for all the chilled and benighted sons of mortality. In calling every man to be a priest, it virtually condemns every possible priesthood; and in recognizing the religion of the New Covenant, the religion written on the heart, of a law put within the soul, it abolishes all formal worship.

"The priest is universally a tyrant, universally the enslaver of his brethren, and therefore it is that Christianity condemns him. It could not prevent the reëstablishment of a hierarchy, but it prepared its ultimate destruction, by denying the inequality of blood, by representing all men as equal before God, and by insisting on the celibacy of the clergy. The best feature of the church was its denial to the clergy of the right to marry. By this it prevented the new hierarchy from becoming hereditary, as were the old sacerdotal corporations of India and Judea.

"We object not to religious instruction. We object not to the gathering together of the people on one day in seven to sing and pray, and listen to a discourse from a religious teacher; but we object to every thing like an outward visible church, to every thing that in the remotest

degree partakes of the priest. A priest is one who stands as a sort of mediator between God and men; but we have one Mediator, Jesus Christ, who gave himself a ransom for all, and that is enough. It may be supposed that the Protestants have no priests; but, for ourselves, we know no fundamental difference between a Catholic priest and a Protestant clergyman, as we know no difference of any magnitude, in relation to the principles on which they are based, between a Protestant church, and the Catholic Church. Both are based on the principle of authority, both deny in fact, however it may be in name, the authority of reason, and war against freedom of mind; both substitute dead works for true righteousness, a vain show for the reality of piety, and are sustained as the means of reconciling us to God, without requiring us to be godlike. Both therefore ought to go by the board."

I spoke here of Protestantism as I knew it, but of Catholicity as it was represented to me by Protestants. The Catholic Church had been misrepresented to me, and, when I came to examine her, I found that she did require us to be godlike, as the condition of our actual reconciliation with God; that she did require of us true righteousness, intrinsic justice and sanctity, and that this was precisely the most formidable objection which the reformers urged against her. My statement as against Protestantism was true and just, in so far as Protestantism pretends to be a church; but as against the Catholic Church was, of course, untrue.

The first step was to demolish the outward visible church, and make away with the priesthood,—annihilate the priest. The next step was to "resuscitate the Christianity of Christ. The Christianity of the church has done its work. We have had enough of that Christianity. It is powerless for good, but by no means powerless for evil. It now unmans us and hinders the growth of God's kingdom. The moral energy which is awakened it misdirects, and makes its deluded disciples believe that they have done their duty to God when they have joined the church, offered a prayer, sung a psalm, and contributed of their means to send out a missionary to preach unintelligible dogmas to the poor heathen, who, God knows, have unintelligible dogmas enough already, and more than enough. All this must be abandoned, and Christianity, as it came from Christ, be taken up and preached, and preached in simplicity and in power.

"According to the Christianity of Christ no man can

enter the kingdom of God, who does not labor with all zeal and diligence to establish the kingdom of God on earth; who does not labor to bring down the high, and bring up the low; to break the fetters of the bound and set the captive free; to destroy all oppression, and to establish the reign of justice, which is the reign of equality, between man and man; to introduce new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness, wherein all shall be as brothers, loving one another, and no one possessing what another lacketh. No man can be a Christian who does not labor to reform society, to mould it according to the will of God and the nature of man; so that free scope shall be given to every man to unfold himself in all beauty and power, and to grow up into the stature of a perfect man in Christ Jesus. No man can be a Christian who does not refrain from all practices by which the rich grow richer and the poor poorer, and who does not do all in his power to elevate the laboring classes, so that one man shall not be doomed to toil while another enjoys the fruits; so that each man shall be free and independent, sitting under his own vine and fig-tree, with none to molest or to make afraid. We grant the power of Christianity in working out the reform we demand; we agree that one of the most effectual means of elevating the working-men is to christianize the community. But you must *christianize* it. It is the Gospel of Jesus that you must preach, not the gospel of the priests."

After this the resort must be to the government as the agent of society, or the instrument of carrying out its ideas. Through the government we must break up the banks and great business corporations, destroy the modern credit system, and introduce those changes in regard to the descent and distribution of property proposed by the Saint-Simonians. These were the principal offensive points in my essay, though some attacks in it on the factory system, and on the middling classes of society, represented as far more hostile to the working-men than the aristocracy, were not very acceptable. I am not surprised that my doctrines were denounced as horrible, but I am surprised to find such men as Theodore Parker, Wendel Phillips, and Henry Ward Beecher, continuing to preach the most horrible of them, and almost with public approbation.

CHAPTER XIII.—GETTING BETTER.

It required no great effort to defend these doctrines on Protestant and democratic principles. No one but a Catholic can consistently assert the church in the sense in which I opposed it, and the denial of the priesthood is an essential element of Protestantism. It is only figuratively that Protestantism has an altar or a sacrifice, and without both there is no priest. Protestants have ministers and preachers, but no priests, and they seldom or never call their preachers or pastors by that name.

But this abolition of the church and the priesthood was necessary to my view of the new religious organization of mankind. The error of the past had been in the double organization of society, the one temporal, the other spiritual. "The mission of Jesus," I wrote in explanation and defence of my essay, "was twofold. One purpose of his mission was to make an atonement for sin, and prepare the soul for heaven in the world to come. The other purpose was to found a holy kingdom on the earth, under the dominion of which all men should finally be brought. This holy kingdom, which Christ came to found on the earth, has been mistaken for the outward visible church; and the church has therefore been held to be a spiritual body, a body corporate, independent in itself, and distinct from the body politic, or civil society. This has given rise to a double organization of mankind: one for material interests, called the state, and under the control of the civil government proper; the other for spiritual purposes, called the church, and governed by laws and officers of its own, distinct from those of the state.

"Now to this we strenuously object. We would establish the kingdom of God on the earth, but we would not have a double organization of mankind. We would have but a single organization; and this we would call, not the church, but the state. This organization should be based on the principles of the Gospel, and realize them as perfectly as finite men can realize them. The kingdom of God is an inward, spiritual kingdom. In plain language, it is the dominion of truth, justice, and love. Now we would build up this kingdom, not by founding an outward visible church, but by cultivating the principles of truth, justice, and love in the soul, and by bringing society and all its acts into harmony with them. Our views, if carried out, would realize, not the *union*, but the *unity* of church and state.

They would indeed destroy the church as a *separate* body, as a distinct organization; but they would do it by transferring to the state the moral ideas on which the church was professedly founded, and which it has failed to realize. They would realize that idea of a 'Christian Commonwealth,' after which our Puritan fathers so earnestly and so perseveringly struggled."

The new church, or religious institution, I had asserted in my *New Views* to be necessary, it will be recollected, was to be based on the union, or rather unity, of the spiritual and the material; and therefore, to be consistent, I must reject the double organization which had obtained under Catholicity, and was attempted to be continued under Protestantism. The error of the old church was, that it was organized in the interest of the spiritual to the exclusion of the material; the error of the state had hitherto been that it was organized in the interests of the material to the exclusion of the spiritual. The new order must unite the two, the spiritual and the material, in a single organization, as the soul and body are united and form one living man.

In 1836 I was disposed to call the new organization the church instead of the state; in 1840, I was disposed to call it the state rather than the church; but my principles, doctrines, and opinions were the same at both epochs. It made no difference as to the character of the organization itself, by whichever name it was called; it remained precisely the same; but by calling it state instead of church, I could obtain for it more support. Many would labor to organize the state on what I regarded as Christian principles, and to realize in its constitution and administration the purposes of the Gospel as I understood it, that would have stood aloof or even opposed me, if I had called upon them to aid me in founding a new church. Moreover, I saw or thought I saw in the American political constitution the germ of the very organization I was in pursuit of. This was the view taken by my most distinguished and influential friends. It was thought that, by uniting with the Democratic party, at once the conservative and the movement party of the country, and indoctrinating it with our philosophical, theological, and humanitarian views, we could make it the instrument of realizing our ideas of men and society. I adopted this the more readily, because my philosophical studies, which I had begun to prosecute in earnest, had led me to the rather important conclusion that man cannot found institutions absolutely new, that he can

develop, but not create, and therefore the new must have its root in the old. The future can be only the development and perfection of the past. I must then either begin with the old church and develop and modify that to the new wants, or I must do the same with the state. The former is impracticable, because the old church is founded on the ideas of immobility and unchangeableness, and therefore excludes the idea of its own development or progressiveness. This was not the case with the state, especially in this country. The American state contemplates progress, and provides for its own amendment. What we had then to do, was to imbue the Democratic party with our ideas of Christian democracy, in order to wield the whole political power of the Union in favor of the end contemplated, and to make the state a truly Christian state, or to develop it into that organization of mankind which was to rule the future. It was with this view that my *Quarterly Review*, after the publication of its first number, in January, 1838, supported the Democratic party, and labored to imbue it with the doctrines of what was then called the Boston school.

This doctrine of the single organization of mankind, or the unity of church and state, had many friends among the profoundest thinkers and most approved writers of the country, and is more or less distinctly held by our abolitionists and philanthropists, who seek to make the state the agent for realizing their spiritual ideas and moral doctrines. It was implied in the reformation itself, and attempted to be realized by Calvin in Geneva, and by the Puritan colonists of New England. It had been defended by Mr. Alexander H. Everett in *The North American Review*, and by an able writer in *The Christian Examiner*, the organ of the Unitarians, long before I broached it. It was embraced by the Saint-Simonians, and held by all the socialists who did not reject the state for phalansteries or communities. Indeed, it is reasonable and just, if you recognize only the natural order. At the time I held it, though I accepted all the Christian mysteries in a sense of my own, I had no conception of the supernatural order. God and nature, or God in nature, embraced all the being or existence I admitted. The supernatural was either God as transcending creation, of which no revelation had been made, or it was the metaphysical, the supersensible, as Coleridge seemed to maintain. I had not the least conception of a created order of supernatural existence, or life above the natural; and with only a

single order of life, the double organization of mankind could not and cannot be defended. That is defensible only on the condition that there are two orders, the one natural and the other supernatural, and that man lives or may live in this world both a natural and a supernatural life. The Catholic Church is the supernatural organization of the supernatural order,—an order that cannot be represented by the state, which is and can be only the natural organization of the natural. From my stand-point at the time, I was perfectly right in rejecting the church as an organization distinct from the state.

My doctrines touching the church and the priesthood were not those by which I gave the most offence. The really horrible doctrines in the eyes of the public were my supposed doctrine on marriage, my condemnation of the system of wages, and my proposition to change the laws which govern the descent and redistribution of property. I have cited the passage relating to marriage. What was running in my head when I wrote it, I no longer remember. I did not at that time deny the indissolubility of the marriage contract. My language was construed to mean a denial of marriage, and the assertion of what is called the "free-love" system; but I certainly held no such system, if I ever had done so, after my connection with the Fanny-Wright school had ceased. In defending myself at the time, I took the Catholic ground, without much consistency, that marriage is a sacrament and indissoluble; and alleged that what I complained of was the viciously-organized state of society, which makes marriages mercenary, and renders it to a great extent impossible for them to be founded on love or mutual affection. I suspect that there was a slight touch of sentimentalism, and no very clear or definite meaning in what I wrote. There might have been some nonsense, but there was no looseness.

The proposition with regard to property was thrown out avowedly, not for adoption, but for discussion. It was simply the doctrine of the Saint-Simonian school, which I have already stated. It did not interfere with private property, or dispossess a single proprietor during his lifetime, or interfere with his free use of his property as long as he lived. It proceeded on the assumption that a man's right of property ceases with his natural life, and therefore that he has no natural right to dispose of his property by will or testament, to take effect after his death; and that the right of

inheritance in the child to the property of the parent is a municipal, not a natural right, or right founded in the law of nature. These assumptions are generally conceded or maintained by jurists; and thus far I proposed nothing new. It was then perfectly competent for the state to abolish the present legislation on the subject, and to enact a new law of descent, and a new statute of distribution. The only question that could arise between me and my opponents was a question, not of right, but of expediency. Is the proposed change expedient? I contended that it was, if we meant to maintain political equality really as well as nominally; and I think even now that, on this hypothesis, I was right. My error was in taking that equality seriously, and in supposing that it would be possible to induce my countrymen to adopt the measures necessary to make it a reality. The objection to my proposition was, not that it was wrong in principle, or would be hurtful in practice, but that it was simply impracticable. Equality is a fine thing to profess, to declaim about, but it is the last thing men will consent to adopt, except in name. It is not displeasing when applied to those above us, but is very disgusting, unreasonable, unnatural, when applied to those below us. I am as good as you, does very well; but, you are as good as I, is quite another affair, and few will accept it, who have not the supernatural virtue of Christian charity.

The gravamen of my offence was my condemnation of the modern industrial system, especially the system of labor at wages, which I held to be worse, except in regard to the feelings, than the slave system at the South. In this I adopted the views of the socialists of France and other countries. The revolution we wanted now was, not a revolution against the king or the crown, but against the *bourgeoisie* or middling class. They who in the European revolutions of 1848 clamored for *la république démocratique et sociale*, held only the views I had advocated in my essay on the laboring classes; and they were the only consistent party that I was able to detect in those revolutions. A democratic government that leaves untouched all the social inequalities, or inequalities of condition, which obtain in all countries, always struck me as an absurdity; and I have seen no reason to change my opinions on that point. The political history of my own country tends to confirm them. In 1840 I had not wholly ceased to believe it possible to introduce such changes into our social and economical arrangements as would give to the

political equality asserted by American democracy a practical significance. I have got bravely over that since.

I took, in regard to society, even as late as 1840, the democratic premises as true and unquestionable. They were given me by the public sentiment of my country. I had taken them in with my mother's milk, and had never thought of inquiring whether they were tenable or not. I took them as my political and social starting-point, or *principium*, and sought simply to harmonize government and society with them. If I erred, it was in common with my democratic countrymen, and I differed from them only in seeking what they did not seek, to be consistent in error. Democratic government was defended on the ground that it recognized and maintained the equality of all men, and was opposed to the system of privilege, class, or castes. It asserted equality as a natural right, and assumed that the introduction and maintenance of equality between man and man is desirable, and essential to the moral, intellectual, and physical well-being of mankind on earth. Taking this, without examination, to be true, I concluded very reasonably that we ought to conform society to it; and that whatever in society is repugnant to it, and tends to prevent its practical realization, is wrong, and should be warred against. My countrymen did not understand me, because they were not in the habit of generalizing their own views, and testing them by the light of first principles. They could reason well enough on particulars, or in particular instances, but not as to the whole of their political and social ideas. They could accept incongruous ideas, and felt no inconvenience in supporting anomalies and inconsistencies. They could defend with equal earnestness perfect equality in theory, and the grossest inequality in practice, and call it common-sense. I could not do that. Either conform your practice, I said, to your theory, or your theory to your practice. Be democrats socially, or do not claim to be so politically. Alas! I did not know then that men act from habit, prejudice, routine, passion, caprice, rather than from reason; and that, of all people in the world, Englishmen and Americans are the least disturbed by incongruities, inconsistencies, inconsequences, and anomalies,—although I was beginning to suspect it.

Starting from the democratic theory of man and society, I contended that the great, the mother-evil of modern society was the separation of capital and labor; or the fact that one class of the community owns the funds, and another and a distinct

class is compelled to perform the labor of production. The consequence of this system is, that owners of capital enrich themselves at the expense of the owners of labor. The system of money wages, the modern system, is more profitable to the owners of capital than the slave system is to the slave-masters, and hardly less oppressive to the laborer. The wages, as a general rule, are never sufficient to enable the laborer to place himself on an equal footing with the capitalist. Capital will always command the lion's share of the proceeds. This is seen in the fact that, while they who command capital grow rich, the laborer by his simple wages at best only obtains a bare subsistence. The whole class of simple laborers are poor, and in general unable to procure by their wages more than the bare necessaries of life. This is a necessary result of the system. The capitalist employs labor that he may grow rich or richer; the laborer sells his labor that he may not die of hunger, he, his wife, and little ones; and as the urgency of guarding against hunger is always stronger than that of growing rich or richer, the capitalist holds the laborer at his mercy, and has over him, whether called a slave or a freeman, the power of life and death.

An examination into the actual condition of the laboring classes in all countries, especially in Great Britain and the United States, where the modern industrial and commercial system is carried furthest, proves this reasoning to be correct. Poor men may indeed become rich, but not by the simple wages of unskilled labor. They never do become rich, except by availing themselves in some way of the labors of others. Dependent on wages alone, the laborer remains always poor, and shut out from nearly all the advantages of society. In what are called prosperous times he may, by working early and late, and with all his might, retain enough of the proceeds of his labor to save him from actual want; but in what are called "hard times," it is not so, and cases of actual suffering for want of the necessaries of life, nay, of actual starvation, even in our own country, are no rare occurrences. It would be difficult to estimate the amount of actual suffering endured by the honest and virtuous poor in every one of our larger towns and cities, and which neither private nor public charity can reach.

The evil does not stop here. The system elevates the middling class to wealth, often men who began life with poverty. A poor man, or a man of small means in the beginning, be-

come rich by trade, speculation, or the successful *exploitation* of labor, is often a greater calamity to society than a wealthy man reduced to poverty. An old established nobility, with gentle manners, refined tastes, chivalrous feelings, surrounded by the prestige of rank, and endeared by the memory of heroic deeds or lofty civic virtues, is endurable, nay respectable, and not without compensating advantages to society in general, for its rank and privileges. But the upstart, the *novus homo*, with all the vulgar tastes and habits, ignorance and coarseness, of the class from which he has sprung, and nothing of the class into which he fancies he has risen but its wealth, is intolerable, and widely mischievous. He has nothing to sustain him but his money, and what money can purchase. He enters upon a career of lavish expenditure, and aids to introduce an expensive and luxurious style of living, destructive of genuine simplicity of manners, and of private and social morals. Moral worth and intellectual superiority count for nothing. Men, to be of any account in their town or city, must be rich, at least appear to be rich. The slow gains of patient toil and honest industry no longer suffice. There is in all classes an impatience to be rich. The most daring and reckless speculations are resorted to, and when honest means fail, dishonest, nay, criminal, means are adopted. The man of a moderate income cannot live within his means. His wife and daughters must have the house new furnished, or a new house taken up town, and must dress so as to vie with the wives and daughters of the millionaires of Fifth Avenue. Nobody is contented to appear what he is, or to enjoy life in the state in which he finds himself. All are striving to be, or to appear, what they are not, to work their way up to a higher social stratum, and hence society becomes hollow, a sham, a lie.

Between the master and the slave, between the lord and the serf, there often grow up pleasant personal relations and attachments; there is personal intercourse, kindness, affability, protection on the one side, respect and gratitude on the other, which partially compensates for the superiority of the one and the inferiority of the other; but the modern system of wages allows very little of all this: the capitalist and the workman belong to different species, and have little personal intercourse. The agent or man of business pays the workman his wages, and there ends the responsibility of the employer. The laborer has no further claim on him, and he

may want and starve, or sicken and die, it is his own affair, with which the employer has nothing to do. Hence the relation between the two classes becomes mercenary, hard, and a matter of arithmetic. The one class become proud, haughty, cold, supercilious, contemptuous, or at best superbly indifferent, looking upon their laborers as appendages of their steam-engines, their spinning-jennies, or their power-looms, with far less of esteem and affection than they bestow on their favorite dogs or horses; the other class become envious, discontented, resentful, hostile, laboring under a sense of injustice, and waiting only the opportunity to right themselves. The equality of love, of affection, cannot come in to make amends for the inequality of property and condition.

To remedy these evils, I proposed to abolish the distinction between capitalists and laborers, employer and employed, by having every man an owner of the funds as well as the labor of production, and thus making it possible for every man to labor on a capital of his own, and to receive according to his works. Undoubtedly my plan would have broken up the whole modern commercial system, prostrated all the great industries, or what I called the factory system, and thrown the mass of the people back on the land to get their living by agricultural and mechanical pursuits. I knew this well enough, but this was one of the results I aimed at. It was wherefore I opposed the whole banking and credit system, and struggled hard to separate the fiscal concerns of the government from the moneyed interests of the country, and to abolish paper currency. I wished to check commerce, to destroy speculation, and for the factory system, which we were enacting tariffs to protect and build up, to restore the old system of real home industry. The business men of the country saw as clearly as I did whither my propositions tended, and took the alarm; and as the business interests, rather than the agricultural and mechanical interests, ruled the minds of my countrymen, I had my labor for my pains. I went directly against the dominant sentiment of the British and American world, and made war on what it holds to be its chief interest and its crowning glory. Here was the gravamen of my offence. I had dared take democracy at its word, and push its principles to their last logical consequences; I had had the incredible folly of treating the equality asserted as if it meant something, as if it could be made a reality, instead of a miserable sham. It was the attacks I made on the modern industrial and commercial

system, that gave the offence. Mr. Bancroft, who had been one of my stanchest friends, could not go with me in my views of property, though he did not object to my views with regard to the church and the priesthood. John C. Calhoun, of South Carolina, told me that in what I had said of the priests I was right. "You have," he said, "told the truth of them. But your doctrine as to the descent and distribution of property is wrong, and you will do well to re-examine it." I was not wrong, if the premises from which I reasoned were tenable; and I am unable even to-day to detect any unsoundness in my views of the relation of capital and labor, or of the modern system of money wages. I believe firmly even still that the economical system I proposed, if it could be introduced, would be favorable to the virtue and happiness of society. But I look upon its introduction as wholly impracticable, and therefore regard all thought and effort bestowed on it as worse than thrown away. We must seek its equivalent from another source, in another order of ideas, set forth and sustained by religion.

My political friends, as may well be believed, were indignant, if not precisely at my views, at my inopportune publication of them. I had injured my party, and defeated by my rashness the success of its candidates. They came to the conclusion that whatever my honesty, my zeal, or ability, I was deficient in the essential qualities of a party leader. In this they were right, but they reasoned from wrong premises. I had my own purpose in publishing my essay on the laboring classes; and what they supposed I did from rashness, mere wantonness, I did with deliberation, with "malice aforethought." I have seldom, if ever, published any thing in the heat of blood, or without being well aware of what I was doing, and I must bear the full responsibility of doing it. That is, I have always acted from reason, not impulse; my reason may or may not have been a good one, but it always seemed to me a good one at the time, and generally was a good one from the position I occupied.

I had, at the persuasion of friends, given my support, such as it was, to the Democratic party, with the hope of making that party the instrument of carrying out my views. A short experience convinced me that that hope was chimerical. I was convinced of it by the changes I detected taking place in myself. I found myself acquiring a prominent position in the Democratic party, and in a fair way of becoming one of its trusted leaders; but in proportion as I

acquired the confidence of the party, I found myself less disposed to insist on my doctrines of social reform, and less and less at liberty to be myself, and follow my own convictions. I might gain political preferment, I might aspire to the highest posts in the state and nation, and even gain them: at least I had the vanity to believe I could, if I chose. The road to them was open and plain before me, and I understood as well as any other man in the country the means to be used to gain them; but, in gaining them, I must give up my personal freedom and independence, and follow as well as lead my party. I felt, too, for a moment, the workings of political ambition, and dared no longer trust myself. Let me go on as I am going a little longer, and I shall forget all my early purposes, abandon the work to which I have consecrated my life, or become so involved in the meshes of party, or form so many political relations, that I can no longer be free to return to my work without compromising my friends, my party, and perhaps myself. The best and shortest way, because the honestest and most straightforward, is, now before I become deeper involved, to come out and publish in the most startling form possible my whole ulterior thought, without circumlocution or reticence. If the party accept my views, which of course they will not, well and good; if not, as will be the case, the party ties will be broken, and I shall be free to publish my honest convictions without fear of compromising any body but myself. I shall be free to act as I think proper, unshackled by party obligations, or even personal friendships. Such were my reasons, avowed to those who shared my confidence, before the article was written. For my party the act was impolitic; for myself it was necessary and prudent. I look back upon it to-day as the least discreditable act I had hitherto performed; and there was in it something bordering on moral heroism, which has not been without its reward.

When I published my essay, I supposed it would close my literary as well as my political career. But the manner in which I was assailed aroused for a moment my indignation, and made me resolve, contrary to my original intention, to defend myself, and to show that I could more than regain before the public the position I had lost. I defended my essay at length and with vigor in the following number of my *Review*, and silenced the noisy clamors raised against me. I retained and enlarged my audience, and assumed a higher tone and position than I had ever before held, though

not without making the greatest intellectual efforts, and using all the arts of popularity I was capable of. I felt in those times that, to be popular or unpopular, is simply a matter of one's own choice. In the three years that followed I gained more than I had lost, and I never stood higher, commanded more of the public attention, or had a more promising career open before me, than at the moment when I avowed my conversion to Catholicity. I did not value reputation for its own sake, I have never done so; and if I labored to recover the ground I had lost, it was simply to prove that I could do so when I chose. It cost me not a pang to throw all away on becoming a Catholic, and to be regarded as henceforth of no account by my non-Catholic countrymen, as I did not doubt I should be. There is something else than reputation worth living for.

The publication of my *Essay on the Laboring Classes* marked the crisis in my mental disease. In it I had made my confession to the public; I had made, as I have already said, a clean breast of it, and had no further concealment. I had thrown off a heavy load which had been accumulating for years, and felt relieved. From that moment a change came over the temper of my madness. I had gone as far in the direction I was going as I could go. I had reached the last stage in that journey, and there I must stop and remain, or retrace my steps. I had one principle, and only one, to which, since throwing up Universalism, I had been faithful, —a principle for which I had perhaps made some sacrifices: that of following my own honest convictions whithersoever they should lead me. I had drawn from the premises furnished me by my non-Catholic and democratic countrymen, their strictly logical conclusions, and these same countrymen had recoiled from them with horror. Either they are wrong in doing so, or their premises are false. Suppose I examine these premises, and see if this Protestant and democratic theory of man and society, to which the world seems tending, is not itself founded in error.

The electioneering campaign of 1840, carried on by doggerels, log cabins, and hard cider, by means utterly corrupt and corrupting, disgusted me with democracy as distinguished from constitutional republicanism, destroyed what little confidence I had in popular elections, and made me distrust both the intelligence and the instincts of "the masses." I sat down to the scientific study of government, in its grounds, its origin, its forms, and its administration. I read

for the first time Aristotle on Politics; I read the best treatises, ancient and modern, on government within my reach; I studied the constitutions of Greece and Rome, and their history, the political administration of ancient Persia, the feudal system, and the constitutions of modern states, in the light of such experience and such philosophy as I had, and came to the conclusion that the condition of liberty is order, and that in this world we must seek, not equality, but justice. To the maintenance of order in the state, and justice between man and man, a firm, strong, and efficient government is necessary. Liberty is not in the absence of authority, but in being held to obey only just and legitimate authority. Evidently, I had changed systems, and had entered another order of ideas. Government was no longer the mere agent of society, as my democratic masters had taught me, but an authority having the right and the power to govern society, and direct and aid it, as a wise providence, in fulfilling its destiny. I became henceforth a conservative in politics, instead of an impracticable radical, and through political conservatism I advanced rapidly towards religious conservatism. So I date my beginning to amend, from the publication of my so-called "horrible doctrines."

CHAPTER XIV.—MAN NO CHURCH-BUILDER.

I had settled it that there is no true liberty without order, and no order without a constituted authority. Then, since no progress without liberty, my new church, necessary to the maintenance of order, instead of coming after progress and being its result, must precede it, and be the condition of effecting it. I cannot effect the progress of man and society without the new organization. That I settled long ago. But how without that progress obtain the new organization, or the new church itself?

Here was a problem I had neglected to solve,—a problem, too, of no little difficulty. It will be easy enough to effect the progress when I have the means in my hands, but how am I to get the means? I cannot effect my end, the creation of a heaven on earth, without means; how any more without means create my new church, by which I am to effect that end? Whence proceeds the organic power to erect the new institution, which is to elevate the human race above their present condition, and to set them forward in an endless career of progress? I have heretofore maintained that ideas are potent, and proceeded on the supposition that

they have the intrinsic force to actualize themselves. Ideas, I was accustomed to say with my friend, Bronson Alcot, the American Orpheus, when once proclaimed, will take unto themselves hands, build the new temple, and instaurate the new worship; but ideas in themselves are not powers, have no active force, and can be rendered real and active only as clothed with concrete existence by a power distinct from themselves. Suppose, then, that I really have the true ideas, suppose that I see clearly and distinctly what is to be done, it by no means follows that I have the power to do it,—to concrete the ideas, to actualize them, to embody them in a real and living organization of the race.

Certain it is that man, speak we of the race or of the individual, has no proper creative power. He can work only on and with the materials furnished to his hands. The great things he does, he does only by availing himself of the great active forces of the universe in which he is placed. The forces that propel the machinery he constructs are not his own, nor of his own creation; they are forces that already exist, and exist and operate without any dependence on either his intellect or his will. The water that drives his mill, the steam that propels his ship in defiance of wind and tide, the electricity that sends his messages instantaneously round the globe, and brings back an answer, are all powers created to his hand, and he only adapts them to his use. Undoubtedly the power of association is great, but it is at best only the sum of the separate powers associated. Association generates no new power; it only collects, concentrates, and utilizes the powers of the individuals embraced in the association. The power of the race is only the power of all men, the combined power of the individuals who compose it; for, aside from the individuals, from all men, there is no actual man, no actual humanity. The race, as distinguished from individuals, is only an idea, only ideal, not actual, man; for man is actual, concrete existence only in men. In my new association or organization, I may have the sum of the life that the race already lives or has attained to, but no augmentation of life. The organization can, then, give me, give the human race itself, nothing above what we already have. How, then, with nothing more than what we already have, am I to get my new organization, and in it the means and conditions of future progress, or of becoming more than we are?

Man is now below what I would have him, and behind

the goal I propose for him. I propose his progress; I propose to elevate him in virtue and happiness. But if he is below what I would have him, how, with him alone, am I to elevate him? Man is what he is, and, with only man, how am I to make him, or is he to become, more than he now is? Man only equals man. From man I can get only man, and, with man alone, I have and can have nothing above man. No man can rise above himself, or lift himself by his own waistband. Archimedes is reported to have said, "Give me whereon to stand, and I will move the world;" for there is no law of mechanics by which you can raise a body without something distinct from it on which to rest the fulcrum of your lever. The ship cleaves its way through the ocean, or the bird through the air, only by finding a counter-pressure or resisting force in the fluid cleaved. There can be no motion without rest, no movable without the immovable. Nothing cannot make itself something, and the imperfect, without borrowing from what is not itself, cannot make itself perfect. *Ex nihilo nihil fit.* My new church, then, if it is to elevate the race and be the means of their progress, must embody a power above that which they now have. Whence is that power to come? How am I to obtain it, and obtain it as I must, without my new church, and obtain it as the condition of organizing it?

Undoubtedly, there is such a phenomenon as growth. We see it in vegetables, in animals, in man; but all growth is by accretion, by assimilation from abroad. The acorn develops and grows into the oak, only by virtue of the substance it assimilates from the soil, air, and light. It must have food, appropriate food; and it is only through assimilating the food by a living process determined by the internal law of the oak, that it grows and expands into the tree. So of the whole animal world. No animal can grow or even live by itself alone. Thus is it in the material order, as all men know and concede. Else why the necessity of food, of drink? The spiritual and material correspond, for the material does in its order but copy or imitate the spiritual. Neither in body nor soul, then, can man grow or make progress,—for progress is nothing but growth,—with himself alone, or without assimilating to himself appropriate food from abroad. Progress there may be, and undoubtedly is, and this progress is effected by processes determined by the internal law or nature of man, but not without the aid of that which is not man. Here I derived no little aid from the writings of Pierre Leroux.

Pierre Leroux, a French philosopher and politician, member of the National Assembly in 1848, whose name was frequently heard under the republic which ended in the present French Empire, in connection with the socialists and the banquets of love, was originally affiliated to the Saint-Simonians, and retains, or did at my latest information, many of the principles of their school. He is a man of learning, in whose head ferments a marvellous variety of ideas, and who, with the exception of Malebranche, must be regarded as the ablest and most original philosopher France has produced. As a writer, he lacks the repose, the classic grace, the sustained elegance and finish of Victor Cousin, but he is free, bold, and energetic. His writings are voluminous. For some time he edited the *Revue Encyclopédique*, in connection with J. Reynaud. He commenced in 1836 the *Encyclopédie Nouvelle*, not yet finished ; subsequently he edited, in connection with George Sand and the late Abbé de La Mennais, the *Revue Indépendante*, in which George Sand first published her *Consuelo*. He has published a new French translation of Plato, though whether made by him or by some of his disciples under his direction, I am not informed ; and a remarkable work in its way, entitled *L'Humanité*. My personal knowledge of his writings is confined to this last-mentioned work, to his *Réfutation de l'Éclectisme*, and his articles in the *Encyclopédie Nouvelle*. He was a fellow-pupil with Victor Cousin, in *L'École Normale*, and since the revolution of July, has appeared as his rival and bitter opponent.

The *Réfutation de l'Éclectisme* was first published in 1839, but I first read it in 1841. It had a marvellous effect in revolutionizing my own philosophical views, or rather of emancipating me from my subjection to the eclectic school founded by Cousin and Jouffroy. Like most English and Americans of my generation, I had been educated in the school of Locke. From Locke I had passed to the Scottish school of Reid and Stewart, and had adhered to it without well knowing what it was, till it was overthrown by Dr. Thomas Brown, who, in the introductory lectures to his philosophy, revived the scepticism of Hume, and drove me into speculative atheism, by resolving cause and effect into invariable antecedence and consequence, thus excluding all idea of creative power or productive force. Still young, I rushed into pure sensism and materialism, and was prepared intellectually to join with Frances Wright and her followers,

when they appeared. Gradually I had elaborated a sort of philosophical sentimentalism, depending on the heart rather than the head, bearing some analogy to the tendencies of Bernardin de St. Pierre, Madame de Staël, Benjamin Constant, Châteaubriand, Adam Smith, and Jacobi. In this half-dreaming state, with vague feelings, and vaguer notions, I encountered the philosophical writings of Cousin, first, I think, in 1833, and yielded almost entirely to the witchery of his style, the splendor of his diction, the brilliancy of his generalizations, and the real power of his genius, although I made from first to last certain reserves.

Victor Cousin was born in 1792, and his original destination was literature; but captivated by the *Leçons* of Laromiguière and Royer-Collard, he resolved to devote himself to philosophy. He was first *répétiteur*, and then professor of philosophy in the normal school, subsequently professor of the history of philosophy in the Faculty of Letters at Paris. His first course, which has been published, was given in 1816, and is most remarkable as the production of a young philosopher not twenty-five years of age. His course for the half year of 1828, and his full course for 1829, and his *Fragments Philosophiques*, collected and published in 1826, with an elaborate preface, were the first of his writings that came into my hands; and they remain, as modified in subsequent editions, his principal philosophical works up to the present time. He has edited the works of Proclus and Descartes, and the previously unpublished works of Abelard, preceded by a history of the scholastic philosophy. He has also published a translation into beautiful French, hardly inferior to the original Greek, of the complete works of Plato, with an introduction and notes to most of the Dialogues, in thirteen volumes octavo, with the promise of a new Life of the author, and a critical judgment of his philosophy, which have not yet appeared. Latterly he has published a new edition of one of his earlier courses under the title of *Le Vrai, Le Beau, et Le Bien*, The True, The Beautiful, and The Good, and some admirable studies of the literature of the seventeenth century grouped around Pascal, the Duchess de Longueville, Madame de Sablé, &c. As he grows older, he seems to turn more toward religious ideas, and to manifest less disrespect for Christianity and the church. In politics he is a constitutionalist, or what was formerly termed a *doctrinaire;* and under the republic of 1848, he acted for the most part with the conservative majority. I

was not the first of his disciples in this country, but I was among his most ardent admirers, and perhaps contributed more than any other one man to draw the attention of American thinkers to his philosophy.

Gioberti, in a note of two hundred pages or more to the third volume of his *Introduzione allo Studio della Filosofia*, has pointed out and refuted in a masterly manner the errors of Cousin's doctrine on ontology, creation, and moral liberty, but he speaks, in my judgment, too slightingly of his philosophical genius, as he does also of Leroux's. Whoever has read attentively the philosophical writings of the illustrious Italian, cannot fail to perceive that he has been far more indebted to these two Frenchmen, whom he affects to despise, than it pleases him to acknowledge. Neither can I agree with the Italian that Jouffroy, the most distinguished of Cousin's early disciples, had a truer and loftier philosophical genius than his master. Yet Jouffroy, who died too young for philosophy, or for his own fame, was no doubt a superior man, a clear, systematic, and logical thinker, with an amiable disposition and a transparent soul, who never ceased to regret the loss of his early Catholic faith, which I would gladly believe he recovered before his death; but he never rose above the Scottish school, and died uttering his protest against philosophy. His great merit, and the highest proof he gave of his philosophical genius, was in perceiving the worthlessness of the philosophy he had been teaching, and its vast inferiority to the Catechism he had rejected. He had not, however, the genius that penetrates through the mass of errors, and seizes the great, living, and eternal truth, which so many philosophers misapprehend, misinterpret, and misapply. But, be all this as it may, I acknowledge willingly my indebtedness in philosophy to both Victor Cousin and Théodore Jouffroy, who have served me hardly less by their errors than by their truths.

Cousin had labored to combine the method of the psychologists with that of the new German school of Schelling and Hegel. He starts with the facts of consciousness, and professes, by careful observation and rigid induction, to rise to the ideas of the true, the beautiful, and the good, and then, from these necessary, absolute ideas, as he calls them, to descend to the region of psychology, and by their light to verify anew the facts of consciousness, previously analyzed. But these absolute ideas, what are they? Cousin makes them the constituent elements of reason. But of what

reason? The divine or the human? If of the divine, how does our intelligence grasp them? If of the human, how determine their objective validity, or, to use the language of the schoolmen, their existence *a parte rei?* Cousin's answer is confused and unsatisfactory. Reason, he maintains, is indeed constituted by these ideas, they are its constituent elements; but the reason they constitute is the spontaneous and impersonal reason, not our personal or reflective reason. Therefore these absolute ideas are objective in relation to our personality, that is to say, to our principle of voluntary activity, *le moi*, the me. But what is this impersonal, spontaneous reason, operating without our voluntary activity? Is it essentially distinct from the personal or reflective reason? Cousin tells us that it is not; that there are not two reasons; that spontaneity and reflection are simply two modes in which one and the same reason operates. Then this one reason, is it objective or subjective? Is it the divine reason, or is it a faculty of the human soul?

Cousin maintains that it is the divine reason, and at the same time a faculty of the human soul. But here is a grave difficulty. How make the divine reason, indistinguishable from the divine being or essence, a human faculty, and therefore essentially human, without identifying God and man, and falling into pure pantheism or pure atheism? To escape this difficulty, Cousin attempts to distinguish between God and reason, between the divine being and the Logos, and to present the divine reason, not as God, but as the Word of God. In this, however, he misapprehends the Christian dogma of the Trinity, on which he professes to found his distinction, and falls into a grave ontological error. In the Christian dogma of the Trinity, the distinction of being is denied, and the Logos is asserted to be one in essence with the Father. Besides, the Logos, if not one in essence with God, and therefore really and truly God, is creature; for between God and creature there is no middle existence. What is not creature is God, and what is not God is creature. If your spontaneous reason is God, then you make God and man identical; if you distinguish it from God, you make it creature, simply human reason, a faculty of the human soul, and therefore remain still in the region of psychology. Your absolute ideas are only subjectively absolute, and the inquiry returns, How establish their objectivity, or existence *a parte rei?*

This question Cousin has never to my knowledge answered, and therefore has never really advanced beyond the subjectivism of Kant, which, elsewhere, he so effectually refutes. It was always an objection in my mind to his philosophy. His absolute ideas of the true, the beautiful, and the good, which he labors to identify with God, were, after all, on his hypothesis, only abstractions, and could give me only an abstract God, and no living God, no real God at all. Here Leroux, who is regarded by not a few as an atheist, and who does fall, in his *L'Humanité*, into the Hegelian pantheism, came to my aid, by directing my attention to the simple analysis of thought, or to what Cousin calls "the fact of consciousness." Cousin himself had said thought, or the fact of consciousness, is a phenomenon with three elements, subject, object, and their relation. The subject is always *le moi*, or the thinker; the object is always *le non-moi*, or something standing over against the subject, and independent of it; and the relation is the form of the thought. Leroux adopts this, and shows that thought is a synthesis and the resultant of two factors. The subject cannot think without the concurrence of the object, and the object cannot be thought without the concurrence of the subject, or thinker. The subject and object are both given simultaneously in one and the same thought or act, and therefore the reality of the one is as certain as that of the other. The object affirms itself in the fact of consciousness as object, as distinct from, and independent of, the subject; and the subject recognizes itself as subject, as thinker, and therefore as distinct from and opposed to the object. This stripped philosophy of its mystery, divested it of its endless abstractions and vain subtilties, and harmonized it with the common-sense of mankind.

Man cannot think without an object, and, being finite, he can never be his own object. Only God can be the object of his own intelligence, or be intelligent without other than himself; man, whatever else he is, is a dependent being, and is in no instance, in no respect, alone sufficient for himself. He is not intelligent in himself, because he is not intelligible in himself. There is and can be no intelligence where there is no intelligible, or nothing that can be known. We cannot see where there is nothing to be seen. What is not is not intelligible. That which does not exist cannot be an object of thought; for it is not, and therefore cannot present any thing to the mind, can present no resistance or counter-pressure to the mental force. The object, then, is always

real, and no thought ever is or ever can be totally false or purely subjective. A further question may be raised, indeed, as to the light by which the object is thought, or as to the intelligible medium of thought,—a question which Malebranche attempted to solve by what he called "vision in God," and which Cousin comes nearer solving in asserting that absolute ideas are intuitive. But Cousin fails precisely where Plato before him failed, by not distinguishing the idea as archetype in the divine reason from idea as the essence or reality of the thing, regarded as the object of our science. He fails to distinguish reason as divine from reason as a human faculty, and to point out the real relation which subsists between them. He makes only a modal distinction, which is not sufficient to save him from pantheism, and fails to perceive that the divine reason is the human reason only through the medium of the divine creative act,—*mediante actu creativo divino*. The divine reason, indistinguishable from the divine essence or being, at once creates the human reason, and presents itself as its light and its immediate object. We see all things in God, as we see visible objects in the light which illuminates them, though not simply as ideas in the divine mind, as Malebranche appears to have held; for we see existences themselves in their concreteness and reality, not merely their ideas, or possibility of being created.

Having settled it, that man does not suffice for himself in the intellectual order, that he cannot even think himself without thinking what is not himself, or without the concurrence of the object with the subject, I learned from Leroux that the same principle extends to all our acts, and that no act of life is possible without the concurrence of the object. Man lives and can live only by communion with what is not himself. In himself alone, cut off from all not himself, he is neither a progressive nor a living being. His body must have food from without, and so must his heart and his soul. Hence his elevation, his progress, as well as his very existence, depend on the object. He cannot lift himself, but must be lifted, by placing him in communion with a higher and elevating object.

This will be the more evident, if we bear in mind that the fact, any fact, of human life is the joint product of the subject and object, and therefore partakes of the character of each. This is a fact of no inconsiderable importance, and enables us to explain many things certain from observation, from human experience, but which philosophy has hitherto

failed to explain. "Evil communications corrupt good manners," is a proverb as old as human experience, but has philosophy hitherto explained it? Why is it that association with the great and good improves our manners and morals? I meet a great and good man, I hold intercourse or communion with him, and am never after what I was before. I feel that a virtue has gone forth from him and entered into my life, so that I am not, and never can be again, the man I was before I met him. What is the explanation of this fact? How happens it that I am benefited by my intercourse with the good, and injured by my intercourse with the bad? How is it that one man is able to influence another, whether for good or for evil? What is the meaning of *influence* itself? Influence, inflowing, flowing-in,—what is this but the very fact I assert, that our life is the joint product of subject and object? Man lives, and can live only by communion with that which is not himself. This must be said of every living dependent existence. Only God can live in, from, and by himself alone, uninfluenced and unaffected by any thing distinguishable from his own being. But man is not God, is not being in himself, is not complete being, and must find out of himself both his being and its completeness. He lives not in and from himself alone, but does and must live in and by the life of another.

Cut off man from all communion with external nature, and he dies, for he has no sustenance for his body, and must starve; cut him off from all communion with moral nature, and he dies, starves, morally; cut him off from all moral communion with a life above his own, and he stagnates, and can make no progress. All this everybody knows and concedes. Then, to elevate man, to give him a higher and nobler life, you must give him a higher and nobler object, a higher and nobler life with which to commune. To elevate his subjective life, you must elevate his objective life. From the object must flow into him a higher virtue, an elevating element. Thus far I followed Leroux, but I did not and could not follow him in all his applications of the great principle he had helped me to grasp and understand. He sought to apply the principle in an un-Christian sense; I saw, or thought I saw, in it the means of placing myself more in harmony with the common beliefs of Christendom, without violence to my reason.

"Man," said Leroux, "lives by communion with his object, —with nature, with his fellow-men, and with God. He

communes with nature through property, with his fellow-men through family and the state, and with God through humanity." In the first two statements he is right, and asserts a solid basis for property, family, and the state, three institutions which are indispensable to human life; and which, however they may be warred against, are really as indestructible as human nature itself. But in the third statement he adds nothing, for, to commune with God through humanity is nothing else than to commune with our kind, or with other men in the family and the state. Man can live, and the majority of men do live, with only the first two communions named, but he can so live only the life of the human animal,—an unprogressive life, which can never rise to the divine. Leroux knew this, and as he believed firmly in progress, in the progressiveness of the race, nay, of nature, indeed of all natures, he asserted as its condition, communion with God; but as he conceived God as actual only in existences, he asserted for us only the communion with God through humanity, which was in effect simply no communion with God at all, and supplied and could supply no objective element to our life above that which we already have, and cannot as men but have.

Leroux never fairly understood his own philosophy. His analysis of thought had given him the foundation of true realism in opposition to the Kantian subjectivism or idealism; but the moment he had finished his analysis of thought, and proved to us that the life of every man is the joint product of subject and object, and therefore partaking alike of the character of each, he fell into the precise error which I have pointed out in the case of Cousin, that of confounding the ideal with the real. He even went further, and asserted, in violation of his whole ontology, the power of the ideal, which he himself identifies with the possible, to realize or actualize itself,—the very error I had detected in myself, and which he more than any other had enabled me to detect. Subsequently, I believe, in his refutation of Hegel, he professes to refute this error; but in his *Refutation of Eclecticism*, and his huge work on *Humanity*, he asserted God as the Void of the Buddhists, the infinite possibility of the universe, which the universe is continually actualizing, and hence its progress. Yet he had asserted direct intuition of God, that we think God, and God must really be, or we could not think him.

All the contradiction or absurdity of his theology I did

not at the moment perceive, because my mind was taken up with his doctrine that human life is the resultant of two forces, of the intercommunion of subject and object, from which I drew a further conclusion than that drawn by Leroux himself. I drew from it the conclusion that man is not and cannot be in himself progressive, and that his progress depends on the objective element of his life, or, in other words, on his living in communion with God, and not only in a natural communion, as held by Leroux, but also in a supernatural communion. If God vouchsafes us no communion with him but that which we have with him in our own natures and the natural objects in relation with which we are placed, we cannot advance beyond or rise above what we are, for of that communion we have never for a moment been deprived, and never could have been deprived. God, as the divine object of our life, must present himself in a higher order, or we are not elevated above or advanced beyond what we already are. I was obliged, then, either to give up all my hopes of progress, or abandon my doctrine of no God but the God in man, or the identity of the human and the divine. I must recognize God as superior to humanity, independent of nature, and intervening as Providence in human affairs, and giving us, so to speak, more of himself, than he gives in nature. Here, though still far enough from the truth, I had entered into the order of religious ideas, and was headed, for the first time in my life, in the direction of real Christian beliefs, and began to suspect that I might believe as the Christian world had always believed, without abandoning my reason, or doing it the least violence. This filled me with an inexpressible joy. I need not always stand alone, and pine in vain for sympathy with my kind. I, too, may one day enter the brotherhood of believers.

CHAPTER XV.—PROVIDENTIAL MEN.

Pierre Leroux was not, like myself, wholly ignorant of Catholic theology, and he was able to give me some glimpses of what is called by my Puseyite friends, "the sacramental system." He knew the Catholic doctrine of grace, and made use of it in explaining his doctrine of progress. His aim was to find a philosophical equivalent for the infused habits of grace, asserted by the church, but rejected by all classes of Protestants, and which I had not at that time even so much as heard of; but in his effort to do this, and to

show that what Catholics mean by infused habits, is attainable by the natural communion of man with man, or of the individual with the race, he enabled me to see that grace might be infused, in accordance with the law of life, and without the slightest violence to nature or reason.

According to the law of all dependent life, man lives not by himself alone, but by communion with an object not himself; and his actual life partakes alike of the object and the subject, of which it is the joint product. In the fact of life, the object is not passive, but active, as active, to say the least, as the subject; for, if purely passive, it would offer no counteraction to the subject, and be practically no object at all. The object acts on the subject no less than the subject on the object. They mutually act and react on each other, and in their mutual action and reaction the fact of life is generated. The object by its action flows into the subject, and becomes a real element of the life of the subject. If, then, we suppose the object supernaturally elevated, the life of the subject will be elevated also, and his progress secured. Now, as I held that the divine, though distinguishable in reality from the human, could flow into us only through the human, I saw that, by a providential elevation of individuals by the Creator to an extraordinary or supernatural communion with himself, they would live a divine life, and we by communion with them would also be elevated, and live a higher and more advanced life. Thus the elevation and progress of the race would be provided for in accordance with the law of life, by the aid of these individuals providentially elevated, and called by Leroux, "Providential Men."

In this, though I had by no means reached the Catholic thought, I was enabled to conceive the natural and the supernatural as corresponding one to the other; and that it is possible for God to afford us supernatural aid without violence to our natures, and without suspending, superseding, or impairing the laws of our natural life. This, to one who had been accustomed to hold that nature and grace, reason and revelation, can be asserted only as mutually repugnant one to the other, that the one cannot be asserted, as Calvinism, indeed all Evangelicalism, had taught me, without denying the other, was no slight advance. Moreover, it placed me in harmony with the universal belief of the race, for the human race has universally attributed all its elevation and progress to God through inspired prophets, apostles, Messiahs,—in a

word, providential men, or men raised up and extraordinarily endowed by the Creator, to aid his creature man in his ceaseless march through the ages. *

I was far enough from being free from grievous errors, and as yet had not once thought of seeking the old church; but it is clear that I had made some progress, and had embraced, without ceasing to exercise my reason freely, or failing in my pledge to myself of being faithful to my own rational nature, the great principles and facts which placed me on the route to the Catholic Church. I found I could reasonably accept the ideas of providence, special as well as general, supernatural inspiration, supernatural revelation, and Christianity as an authoritative religion, and must do so, or be false alike to history and my hopes of progress. I felt, as I had felt from my boyhood, that I had need of an authoritative religion; and that a religion which does not and cannot speak with divine authority, is simply no religion at all.

I did not, indeed, conclude from the possibility of the providential men I asserted, that they have actually been raised up and sent; I did not, from the fact that God can give us the needed supernatural aid through them, without violence to nature and reason, and in accordance with the great law of all life, conclude that therefore he actually does so give it. I never yet was so poor a logician as to do that. I was always ready and anxious to believe, providing I could see my way clear to do so without violence to reason, or the abnegation of my own manhood. I never wanted reasons for believing: what I wanted was, to have the real or imaginary obstacles to believing removed. More than this I never needed, never sought; and therefore, precisely as were removed my reasons against believing, I believed.

Most people, born and reared in Christian countries, who reject Christianity, are very much in the condition I was. They reject Christianity, not because they see no good reasons for believing, but because they see, or think they see, many and stronger reasons against believing. They refuse to believe, because they do not understand how supernatural assistance can be rendered without violence to nature; or an authoritative revelation, or a revelation that is to be regarded as authority for reason, can be accepted and submitted to without an abandonment of reason. Such had been the case with me, and consequently, as this obstacle to believing was

*See Reform and Conservatism, Vol. IV. pp. 91–96.

removed, I believed without seeking any further reason for believing.

This was not wholly irrational or unphilosophical. To believe is normal, to disbelieve is abnormal. When the mind is in its normal state, nothing more is ever needed for belief than the removal of the obstacles interposed to believing; for, if we consider it, the mind was created for truth. Truth is its object, and it seeks and accepts it instinctively, as the new-born child seeks the mother's breast, from which it draws its nourishment. Place the mind and truth face to face, with nothing interposed between them, and the truth evidences itself to the mind, and the mind accepts it, without seeking or needing any further reason. The assent termed knowledge follows immediately from the joint forces of the intelligible object and the intelligent subject. So in belief. Practically, it is never a reason for believing, but the removal of reasons against believing, that is demanded. Hence, we always believe what a man tells us, when we have no reason for not believing him: and the business of life could not go on were it otherwise. For belief reason never requires any thing but the mutual presence, with nothing interposed between them, of the credible object and the creditive subject.

I held then, as I hold now, that the office of proof or even demonstration, is negative rather than affirmative. Neither ever goes further than to remove the *prohibentia*, or obstacles to assent. Demonstration, the most rigid and the most conclusive, only shows the object without envelope or disguise, and motives assent only by removing every reason for not assenting. The assent itself is always immediate and intuitive. Truth needs no voucher, and, when immediately presented to the mind, evidences or affirms itself. The will may be perverse, and withdraw the intellect from the contemplation of truth; prejudice or passion may darken the understanding, so that it does not for the moment see or recognize the object; but, whenever the truth is immediately present, and reason looks it full in the face, it knows that it is truth without further evidence, without any thing extrinsic to prove that it is truth. To deny this would be to deny to the soul the faculty of intelligence, the faculty of knowing at all. To know a thing is to know that it is true, for nothing but truth is or can be an object of knowledge. To say that you know a thing, and yet do not know whether it be true or not, is only saying that you do

not know the thing at all. No man does or can know falsehood, for falsehood is nothing, is a nullity, a mere negation, and therefore no intelligible object. Falsehood is intelligible only in the truth it denies, and is known only in knowing that truth. In so far as any proposition is false, it is unintelligible, and never known. In all errors we know only the element of truth which they contain; and the part of error is simply the part of our ignorance, the part in which nothing is known. To know something, and to know it to be true, is one and the same thing; and this is what is meant when we say truth is the object of the intellect. Hence, no logical process is ever needed to prove to the mind that the object it immediately apprehends is truth, or is true. That it is true or truth is included in the fact that the mind apprehends it as its object, or knows it. To suppose the contrary, to suppose that a logical process is needed to demonstrate that the object in immediate relation to the mind is true, would be absurd; for it would demand an infinite series of logical processes to every single act of knowledge or mental assent. There is no reasoning except from premises or principles, and no valid reasoning from either false or unknown principles. How are these premises or principles to be obtained? Not by reasoning, not by a logical process, for, without them, no reasoning, no logical process is possible, and no such thing as proof or demonstration conceivable. They must, then, precede reasoning, be intuitive, that is, evident of themselves. Then, nothing is necessary, in the last analysis, to knowledge, but the immediate presence to each other of the intelligible object and the intelligent subject. So is it in the case of knowledge or science in the natural order, where the object is immediately intelligible to reason.

The principle must hold true, as far as applicable, in the supernatural order, and in regard to faith as well as in regard to science. Faith or belief is assent to propositions not immediately known, on the authority affirming them; that is, it is assent on testimony. The understanding does not assent to them because it sees immediately their truth, as in case of science or knowledge, but because it sees the sufficiency of the authority or testimony affirming them. The immediate object of belief is the veracity of the witness, or the fact that the authority in the case can neither deceive nor be deceived; and here the assent is immediate as soon as the obstacles are removed, because to believe is normal.

If the supernatural and the natural correspond one to the other, as it is here assumed that they do, the same holds true of belief in the supernatural order. We cannot believe the supernatural things revealed without what are called motives of credibility; but these motives do not, so to speak, motive the assent of the mind to the veracity or sufficiency of the authority affirming them. They only show that the authority is credible; that is, remove all the reason we may have, or imagine we have, for regarding it as incredible or untrustworthy. The assent to its veracity or sufficiency when these reasons are removed, is immediate, by the joint forces of the credible object and creditive subject as in the natural order. My conduct, then, in believing in the supernatural order the moment my reasons against believing in it were removed and I saw its accordance with nature and reason, was not rash or precipitate, but truly reasonable and philosophical, in accordance with the principle of all belief, and, indeed, of all science. I asked, and I needed nothing more.

My doing so was justified, also, by the view which I then took, and still take, of the inspiration of the human race. I held that the race lives by immediate communion with God, therefore inspired by him, and hence in its normal state aspires to him. Man lives by immediate communion with God as his object, and therefore the objective element of his life is divine, and through this objective element his life is the life of God. Man thus in his natural life even partakes of God, and this partaking of God I called inspiration. I did not mean by this that the race is supernaturally inspired; I only meant what the Scriptures say, that "there is a spirit in men, and the inspiration of the Almighty giveth understanding;" or, in other words, that man is intelligent, is a rational existence, only by virtue of the immediate presence of God, simultaneously the creator, the object, and the light of his reason. This is the doctrine I now hold, and which I am supposed to have borrowed from Gioberti, but which I held before Gioberti had published it, and long before I had seen his writings or heard his name. Cousin and Leroux had held something like it, but made it, in their explanation of it, a pantheistic doctrine. They did not distinguish with sufficient care between the human reason and the reason of God; and while they made the immediate presence of God in the soul the condition of our intelligence, they did not regard that presence as creating our reason, or

faculty of intelligence, and becoming immediately, in the act of creating it, its object and its light; but left it to be inferred that it is God himself who knows and loves in us: which is virtually pantheism. I distinguished where they did not, and held that it is not God who knows and loves in us, but God in us who creates in us our power to know and to love. The divine reason is not our reason, but, so to speak, the reason of our reason. It creates our reason, and is its immediate light and object. This doctrine is well known to the theologians under the names of the presence of God in all his works, and the divine concurrence in all the acts of his creatures. All theologians teach that it is in God we live, and move, and are, and that his reason is the light of our reason. Hence St. John, speaking of the Word or Logos, one with God, says, he was "the true light which enlighteneth every man coming into this world."

Saying with Eliu in the book of Job, "There is a spirit in men, and the inspiration of the Almighty giveth understanding," I concluded the human race is inspired. God gives understanding, not only in the sense that he creates the faculty, but also in the sense that he is its object. In being the object of the intellect, he is also that of the will, and affirms himself both as the true and the good, as alike the object of knowledge and of love. Hence it is we understand and love, know and aspire. This affirming himself as the true and the good in natural reason is natural inspiration, and the cause of the universal aspiration of the race to God as the infinitely true and the supremely good. In this inspiration and this aspiration of the race, I detect the dignity and authority of the race. In it I find the worth and legitimacy of reason, and vindicate my right to take the reason of the race as a legitimate ground of belief. The reason of the race may be safely followed, because it is the inspiration of the Almighty, who can neither deceive nor be deceived. The race has always recognized, in some form, supernatural communion with God, and held that it is only by virtue of this supernatural communion, that is, a communion in a higher sense than that by which we are rendered capable of knowing and loving in the natural order, that the race is elevated and set forward in its career of progress. Then, to believe in the reality of this communion, in the fact of this supernatural aid or assistance, is not an irrational belief, or a belief on an inadequate authority. The race has always believed that men are elevated and set for-

ward by supernatural assistance, obtained through the agency of specially inspired individuals, or what I call providential men. Wherever you find man, you find him with some sort of religion; and all religions, the lowest and most corrupt, as well as the highest and purest, recognize a supernatural element in human life, and claim, each for itself, the assent of mankind, on the ground of being the channel or medium through which it is attained, or flows into the natural, and supernaturalizes human action. This is the essential, the vital principle of all the religions which are or ever have been. Take this away, and you leave nothing to which the common-sense of mankind does or can give the name of religion. As this supernatural element may flow in without violence or injury to the natural, what reason have you to assert that this common belief of mankind is false or unreasonable? For you, who concede an authoritative religion, propounded and interpreted by an authoritative church, what higher authority is or can there be for believing any thing, than the reason of the race? It is your highest reason after the immediate and express word of God; and not to believe it without a higher reason for discrediting it, is not to follow reason, but to reject reason.

My conduct, then, was not unreasonable, but reasonable; and the joy I felt at finding myself believing in the supernatural providence of God, was no silly joy, but such as I might well indulge, for it proceeded from the recognition by the soul, though as yet but partially and dimly, of the object to which I had always aspired. I had made the greatest step I had yet made, in this recognition of the fact that the human race is advanced by the aid of providential men. In it I seemed to assert my own freedom, and what is more, the freedom of God. No matter how I had reasoned or talked, I had regarded God as a *Fatum*, or an invincible necessity, creating from the necessity of his own being, and hedged in and bound by the invariable and inflexible laws of nature. This is more generally the case with our modern philosophers, and so-called free-thinkers, than is commonly supposed. The real obstacle in many minds to the acceptance of Christian faith, is the want of belief in the freedom of God. Read the works of all your non-Catholic philosophers, and you will find that they nowhere admit providence, or the free intervention of God in the affairs of the universe he has himself created. What they call the providential is always the fixed, the invariable, the inexorable, the fatal.

They reject miracles, the supernatural, or voluntary interpositions on the part of the Creator, because they are assumed to be marks of change, of variability, and forbidden by the laws of nature. I had, in asserting providential men, risen above this difficulty, and become able to understand that, while God binds nature, nature cannot bind him; that being in himself sufficient for himself, no necessity compels him to operate externally, or to create a world; and therefore creation itself must be, on his part, a free, voluntary act, and much more so his intervention in the government of what he has created. This threw a heavy burden from my shoulders, and in freeing God from his assumed bondage to nature, unshackled my own limbs, and made me feel that in God's freedom I had a sure pledge of my own. God could, if he chose, be gracious to me; he could hear my prayers, respond to my entreaties, interpose to protect me, to assist me, to teach me, and to bless me. He was free to love me as his child, and to do me all the good his infinite love should prompt. I was no longer chained, like Prometheus, to the Caucasian rock, with my vulture passions devouring my heart; I was no longer fatherless, an orphan left to the tender mercies of inexorable general laws, and my heart bounded with joy, and I leaped to embrace the neck of my Father, and to rest my head on his bosom. I shall never forget the ecstasy of that moment, when I first realized to myself that God is free.

CHAPTER XVI.—STRUGGLES AFTER LIGHT.

I had now settled it in my own mind, that the progress of man and society is effected only by supernatural assistance, and that this assistance is rendered by Almighty God, in perfect accordance with nature and reason, through providential men. Cousin had emitted the theory, that the great man is great because he, better than any of his contemporaries, collects and represents, or impersonates, the ideas and sentiments of his own age; but I adopted the opposite doctrine, that the truly great man is great because he makes his age, determines the ideas and sentiments of the race, and by his own elevation lifts them to a higher plane. Truly great men are superior to their age, and give it what it has not and cannot draw from its own funds.

I placed, as yet, our Lord in the category of great men, providential men, along with Abraham, Moses, Zoroaster, Confucius, Socrates, Plato, &c., but I considered him greater

than any of them, and, indeed, as completing the line of providential men, and supplying all that was wanting in those who went before him. I ventured even to call him God-man in a special sense, and thought, for a moment, that, by my doctrine of communion, by virtue of which the object becomes identical with the subject in the fact of life, I could explain the chief mystery of the Incarnation, and, indeed, all the principal Christian dogmas, and find a common ground on which Trinitarians and Unitarians, orthodox and heterodox, conservatives and reformers, the believers in revelation and the advocates of natural reason, could all meet in peace and love, and unite as one man to effect the amelioration and progress of society. It was a brave dream, but only a dream, from which I soon awoke.

I made at the time a distinction between being and life, and held, after Leroux, that being actualizes itself in life or living. I fell here into the fundamental error of all, or nearly all, modern, and no little of ancient, philosophy. The starting-point of Leroux's doctrine, which I accepted from him, that thought is a phenomenon that includes simultaneously subject, object, and their relation, consistently carried out, implies realism as opposed to idealism. It implies that we know the object, because we think it, and we think it simply because it is, and is immediately present to our intellect. I saw and understood this well enough; but, in applying it to being, to ontology, I forgot it, as Leroux himself did. The primitive objective element of thought is indeed being, I said, real being too, but not actual being. Real being and actual being identified give us then: 1, Pure being, *das reine Seyn* of Hegel, which is simply possible being; 2, Idea, or possible being, advanced to the state of type, or mental conception; and 3, Life, *das Wesen*, or being actualized, being advanced from the state of possibility to living being, or complete actuality. These three moments, states, or terms, I had the simplicity to regard as the real significance of the Christian Trinity. Truth is always simpler than error, and requires far less effort to explain or understand it. This possible, or, as Leroux said, virtual being, which precedes both Idea and Life, Leroux identified with the Void of the Buddhists, and represented as standing opposed to the *Plenum* or *Pleroma* of the Gnostics. It was, then, in reality only possible, not actual; but it appears not to have occurred to him any more than it did to me, that the possible without the actual is a mere abstraction and, like all abstrac-

tions, a nullity. Suppose all actual being wanting, and you can conceive of nothing as possible. Suppose no living, actual God, and the possibility of God ceases to be supposable. Hence, Aristotle and all theologians call God *actus purissimus*, most pure act, and deny that in him, in reference to his being or perfections, there is any *possibility*, or any thing *in potentia*, not yet actual, but susceptible of becoming actual. He is eternal, and eternally most full and perfect being. He is so, or he is not at all.

The possible may be considered either in relation to God, or in relation to the creature. In relation to God, it is simply his power to create creatures not actually created; and in relation to creature, it is the creature's power as second cause to do what it has not yet done. Creatures which God may create, but does not, may be said to exist virtually in him, as ideas in his own mind, but, as so existing, they are not distinguishable from his divine being, or essence itself. So the things we may do, but have not yet done, are the virtuality of our nature, and indistinguishable from it. Abstracted from God, the creatures he may create or the ideas he may clothe with existence, are simple nullities, and inconceivable; and so, when abstracted from our power, are the things we may as second causes do, but as yet have not done. It is the actuality of God that renders creation possible, and it is only in the intuition of that actuality, that possible creatures or perfections are conceivable. It is also in the fact of our actuality that we are, or can be conceived, capable of acting, doing, or producing.

As plain and as conclusive as all this is, very few philosophers ever apprehend it; or, if they apprehend it, they apprehend it only as a barren fact, and see no use to be made of it. The great Leibnitz, in commenting on St. Anselm's argument for the existence of God from the idea present to our minds of the most perfect being, says, it would be conclusive if it were previously established that the real existence of most perfect being, or God, is possible! Storchenau, a disciple of Wolf, as Wolf was a disciple of Leibnitz, and whose work has been, and I believe still is, used as a text-book of philosophy even in some Catholic colleges, seems to hold that possible being is anterior to real being, and to precede the actual, living God, by a superior possible God, just as if the actual, living God is not the reason, ground, and condition of all possibility. If God were not, nothing would be possible, not even his own existence. There is

nothing real or possible anterior to God or independent of him. It is he himself in the infinite fulness of his own being that makes creation possible, as it is his own creative act that renders it actual; and that abstract being which we call the nature of things, is concrete in him, and is his own eternal, universal, immutable, and indestructible essence.

The source of the error of placing the possible before the actual, and presenting it as infinite virtuality actualizing itself in the universe, and rising, as Hegel, and after him Cousin, say, to self-consciousness in the consciousness of man, or in our consciousness of our own existence, is in the assumption that it is the subject, not the object, that determines the form of the thought. Cousin and Leroux both say, and say truly, that thought is a phenomenon embracing simultaneously and indissolubly three elements: subject, object, and their relation. They say truly, too, that the relation is the form of the thought. But they both maintain that the subject determines the form, and thus with Kant make the categories forms of the human understanding, and assume that we think things so and so, not because they are so, but because such is the nature or character of our intellect. They hold the object is actualized in our thought, and is only a virtuality when we do not think it. As we never see ourselves in ourselves, and recognize our own existence only as mirrored in the act of thinking, we exist for ourselves only so far as we enter into and manifest ourselves in the act. As, prior to the act of thinking, neither subject nor object actually exists for us, either, independent of our thought, is only a virtuality, not an actuality. Thought therefore is their actualization, and this actualization of subject and object in thought, *la pensée*, is what Leroux meant by life, as distinguished from being. Now, as the form of this life is determined by the subject, we are forced, in applying it to God, to deny that he is actual or living God prior to his being thought, and to regard him as actual or living God only in so far as concreted in our life. Hence the modern pantheism, which represents God as realizing or actualizing himself in idea, idea as realizing itself in the race, the race as realizing itself in individuals, and individuals as realizing themselves in the act of thinking, that is, feeling, knowing, and loving: a superb system of transcendental nullism. The mother error is in supposing that the subject determines the form of the thought, and therefore is the condition of the actualization of the object, as well as

of itself. This supposes that both when unthought are virtualities, not actualities. But there is no thought save by the concurrence of both subject and object. In the generation of thought both subject and object must act. What is not actual cannot act, and therefore both subject and object must be actualities prior to thought, and therefore when unthought. The subject in thought is not alone active, or active at all, save in concurrence with the activity of the object. The object depends on the subject to be thought, if you will, but not to be, or to be actual, for it can be thought only on condition that it exists prior to the thought, and its action precedes the action of the subject.

The common error of philosophers is in supposing that it is the subject that affirms the object, while it is the object that affirms or evidences itself to the subject. This is the condemnation of our psychologists, or those who seek the principle of philosophy, or *primum philosophicum*, in the fact of consciousness, or an affection of the soul, or subject; and the reason why all sound philosophy is and must be ontological, taking its principle in the fact that the object is, and affirms itself in the fact of consciousness along with the subject, and as the condition of its activity. In all human life the action of the object precedes and renders possible the action of the subject. A thing does not exist because we think it, but we think it because it is intelligibly—actively—present to our intelligence, or intellectual faculty. It is, then, not the intelligence that determines the intelligibility of the object, but the intelligibility of the object that determines the intelligence; and therefore the object, not the subject, that determines the form of the thought. Things evidence themselves to us, and we see them because they are, and as they are *a parte rei;* for, if it were not so, we could see what is not, or what does not exist, which would be absurd. What is not, or exists not, is not intelligible.

All this was implied in the doctrine that thought is invariably and indissolubly a synthesis of object, subject, and their relation, though I did not at the time clearly perceive it. Had I done so, I should have perceived that the distinction made between being and life, and the doctrine that both subject and object are actualized in thought, are inadmissible. The object flows in its action into the life of the subject, but not the subject into the object. Both are actual prior to the generation of the thought. But, overlooking this fact, I proceeded on the erroneous assumption, that being, whether

of the object or the subject, when unthought, is latent, virtual, not actual, and is actualized in thought, and therefore that, in the thought, both subject and object are identical. This actualization of subject and object in the act of thinking, is what I called life as distinguished from being. This life I called the life of the subject, because its form is determined by the subject, and hence I maintained that both subject and object live and are one in our life.

Applying this doctrine to our Lord, and seeking to explain by it the mystery of the Incarnation, or to get at the fact covered or intended by that mystery, I took the Incarnation as a fact of life, not of nature. The Christian world calls our Lord God-man. This is true, if you speak of him in his actuality, in his life, not in his nature. Suppose the man Christ Jesus,—for man he was according to the most orthodox teaching,—was taken up, miraculously, if you will, into a supernatural communion with God, so that God, as in the case of every providential man, became his object in a supernatural sense; then, since life partakes alike of subject and object, and is the union or identification of the two, his life must be strictly a divine-human life, and he in the life he lives truly God-man, as the Christian world has always believed. Is not here the Incarnation, the actualization of the divine in the human? And as it is evidently a miraculous communion of the human with the divine, is not this the miraculous conception and birth of our Lord?

But you have only the divine-human life, not the hypostatic union of the two natures in one person. Yet I have two natures united, identified in one life; and as these natures live only by virtue of their intercommunion, I have the union of both the living God and living man in one life. It is the life that redeems and saves. Whatever emphasis may be laid on the death of Christ, it is evident from the Scriptures that his death is referred to only as the completion and crown of his life. He came into the world that we might have life, to beget in us life, a new, a higher, a diviner life. That he redeems the world by infusing life into our life through communion with himself, is the belief of Christendom. As the Father hath life in himself, and as the Son lives by the Father, so his disciples live by him. It is the life that saves; and what else is the real significance of salvation through an incarnate Saviour, or the union in our Lord of this twofold redeeming and saving life?

As the Father hath life in himself, so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself. The Son, by his supernatural or miraculous communion with the Father, lives a divine-human life; so the apostles and disciples, by communion with the Son, lived the same life, and through him became one in life with the Father and with one another, and were elevated above their natural life, and set forward in the career of progress. Here, I said, is the Christian doctrine of Holy Communion, or Eucharistia. The whole mystery of the Christian religion has been supposed to turn around the mystery of Holy Communion; and in this communion the Scriptures teach, and the church has always held, that the communicant really receives the flesh and blood of our Lord. "Except ye eat my flesh, and drink my blood, ye have no life in you." The flesh profiteth nothing, and the church never teaches that we must eat the flesh or drink the blood of Christ in a gross, carnal sense, as we eat meat bought in the shambles. What is meant is, that we really receive, and have incorporated into our life, the divine-human life of our Lord. This is done by communion with him, and through him with God the Father. Thus he becomes to us, through communion, the mediator or medium between God and men, as St. Paul calls him. Thus, from the central point of communion I can explain the Incarnation, the mediatorial life of Christ, and the principal Christian dogmas, as I attempted to show in the Letter on the *Mediatorial Life of Jesus.**

But we who live at this day do not communicate directly with Christ our Lord. We do it, and can do it, only through the medium of others. The apostles and disciples lived in personal intercourse with him, and therefore communed with him directly and immediately as their object. By this direct and immediate communion, his divine-human life became infused into their life. Others, by communion with them, partake of the same life. The succeeding generation participates in it by communing with its predecessor. Thus by communion the life may be infused through all men living contemporaneously, and transmitted to the latest posterity. The apostles become thus the medium of its reception, diffusion, and transmission. Here is the meaning of apostolic succession.

This divine-human life is one and identical in all who receive it, for it is a real life, really lived, not merely

*Vol. IV., p. 140.

desired by the heart, or assented to as a doctrine by the reason. It enters really into the life of individuals as the life of their life. All life is organic; and, consequently, all who live this life are moulded or formed into one body, living one and the same life, the life of Christ, and therefore rightly termed his body, the *Church*, as the Scriptures expressly teach. Hence I have the church, not as an association, an organization, or mere aggregation of individuals, but as an organism, one and catholic,—one because its life is one, and catholic because it includes all who live the life, of whatever age or nation, and because all men in every age and nation may by communion live it. The life of Christ is not only life, but the principle of life, and, operating in the body, assimilates individuals, as the human body assimilates the particles of the food eaten. It is then no sham, no illusion, but the real body of Christ, a real living organism, and in some sense a continuation of the Incarnation.

But as the church includes all who are assimilated by its central life, and as it is only the real reception of that life that elevates and advances one, it is clear that out of the church no one can be saved. There is no other name given under heaven [but the name of Jesus] among men whereby we can be saved; and as he saves us only by communicating his divine-human life, according to the universal law of life, the doctrine of exclusive salvation is and must be strictly true.

But, as the life of the church is a higher than natural life, higher than the life of the race, since it is a divine-human life in a supernatural sense, it is and must be authoritative, not only for my individual reason, but also for the human race itself. It is the highest manifestation of both the divine and the human, and therefore is, in both divine and human things, the highest authority under God, nay, is the authority of God himself. Hence the *authority* of the church, and the reasonableness and obligation of individuals and of all men to submit to her,—to believe what she teaches, and to do what she commands. I found here the authority I had been so long seeking for; a real, legitimate, not a sham or a usurped authority, to which reason could submit without abnegating itself, or ceasing to be reason.

Moreover, the divine-human life which creates or constitutes the church, and is its authority, the authority of the indwelling Holy Ghost,—for I identified the interior life of the church with the Paraclete,—is transmitted in the church

from the apostles, and has been operative at every moment of time from the Incarnation to the present. The life of the church now is identically the life of the church in the first age, by virtue of an uninterrupted communion with the apostles. Each successive generation communes with its predecessor, and derives its life from it. This is the principle of the tradition, or transmission of life, called under one aspect the apostolic succession, and under another, apostolic tradition. As apostolic or ecclesiastical tradition is the tradition of the divine-human life, it is always authoritative with all the authority of that life itself. Hence the authority of tradition, as opposed to the Protestant principle of private judgment. The error of Protestantism was in that it broke with tradition, broke with the past, and cut itself off from the body of Christ, and therefore from the channel through which the Christian life is communicated. Protestantism was a schism, a separation from the source and current of the divine-human life which redeems and saves the world, and Protestants are therefore thrown back upon nature, and able to live only the natural life of the race,—saving the portion of Christian life they brought away with them at the time of the separation, and which, as not renewed from its source, must in time be exhausted.

In the same way I explained all the Christian dogmas I was acquainted with, and found that, do what I would, I must admit that the great current of Christian life had flowed and still flowed down through the Catholic Church. It is evident to every Catholic reader that this theory, elaborated with skill, indeed, and not without some speciousness, is far enough from being an adequate expression of Catholicity. But, as far as it went, it was not false or unworthy of consideration. It indeed demonstrated or proved no peculiar or distinctive Catholic doctrine, and was far enough from being a complete theory, or adequate to its own demands; but it was, in the main, true philosophy, and enabled me to grasp certain laws of life which Christianity accepts, and in accordance with which it acts. It removed, and removed philosophically, all my objections to the more obscure or the more offensive dogmas of the Catholic Church, and showed me how she could operate, in accordance with nature, the elevation of nature, and blend the divine redeeming and saving life in with the human, and make them in the Christian one life. It did not give me the Catholic dog-

mas, nor even the Catholic Church in her deeper significance, but it did prepare me, by the grace of God, to receive them. My philosophy had answered all my objections to the Catholic system, if I may so speak, and had supplied me with all the principles which that system presupposes, and which prove that it harmonizes with the dictates of reason and the demands of nature. There is in the Christian church and and in Christian communion infinitely more than in my doctrine of life and communion; but there is nothing opposed to that doctrine, or which makes it necessary for a Catholic to exclude it. The law of life I asserted is a real, a genuine, and a universal law; the communion I asserted is a real and genuine communion, and is included even in the doctrine of Christian communion; but in Christian communion there is an immediate communion with Christ, an increase of life from the incarnate God, the very source and fountain of all Christian life, not merely a communion with him as he enters into the life of others. Yet there is a communion with him in the way I supposed, a transmission of his life; and the church, in the sense I have explained, is a reality, and church authority, tradition, apostolic succession, &c., as I alleged, are real and true. These are all included in Catholic theology, though they do not, as I supposed, constitute it.

In making this application of the doctrine of life, as I did, my mind was intent mainly on one point, that of the real infusion of a divine element into human life, by which that life should be supernaturally elevated, and rendered progressive. I saw that the law of life explained the possibility and practicability of this; but I did not perceive, in the application of it, how far I departed from the doctrine, that both subject and object when unthought are merely latent or virtual, not actual; because in reality, though I accepted that doctrine from Leroux, as found in connection with the truth he helped me to grasp, it never had any hold on my mind, and never received any attention from me. Back of it in my mind was the true doctrine, that the object, though it may create or actualize the subject, is itself actual antecedently to human thought, as is evident from the fact that I held to Providence, and asserted the free intervention of God in human affairs, that the Father has life in himself, and therefore lives independently of the subject, and that he performs the miracle of raising the man Christ Jesus into a supernatural communion with himself. It is evident that,

however I might have spoken when treating the ontological question, I was not a pantheist, that I held that God is free and independent, and confined the law of life I set forth to created existence. Leroux erred by making the law universal, and by regarding all being not developing itself in human thought, as not actual. These errors I never embraced except in mere words; they never really entered into my thought, and I held from the first, that the law was applicable only to created or dependent existence, and that the subject and object are actual powers and therefore act, not that they are rendered actual by acting. Undoubtedly the intellect can be actual only in acting; but it is inherently active by virtue of the immediate and permanent intuition and creative presence of the intelligible, which is God; but it is actual power to know, before knowing this or that particular object as after, and therefore is not actualized in any degree by knowing.

Making these reserves, the doctrine of life or communion is true, and, taken in connection with the history or traditions of the race, does all that I alleged. I was not thus far deceived. It gave me the church in the sense I asserted. My only error was in supposing that the church and her doctrines were only what I explained them to be. The Christian mysteries lay infinitely deeper than I supposed. But the real advantage to me of the doctrine was, not in its erroneous explanation of the ontological origin of the divine-human life, but in its enabling me to perceive a law of life, in accordance with which it could be infused into us, and supernaturalize our life, by giving to our actions a supernatural principle, as well as a supernatural end. This service it rendered me, and this service it may render to all who comprehend it; and hence it is, in my judgment, a true and useful preparation for the reception of the Gospel.

CHAPTER XVII.—A STEP FORWARD.

It may well be believed that I did not arrive at these conclusions immediately and at a single bound. The transition from one order of thought to another is seldom effected at once. Man is a bundle of habits and prejudices, as well as a being endowed with reason. His progress from one system to another is usually gradual, and remains for a long time incomplete. A ray of light has flashed on his mind, but he does not at once take note of all the objects it illumines. I saw, at first, very little in Leroux to my purpose,

and it was only some time after I had read him that I saw the bearing of his doctrine of life or communion, as I modified it, on theological questions. My mind was forced to take the direction which it did, and to make the application of it I have briefly sketched, by a couple of Lectures by Theodore Parker, to which I listened in the autumn of 1841. The lectures were the first part of the volume, which Mr. Parker subsequently published, entitled, *A Discourse of Matters pertaining to Religion*, and contained nothing except a learned and eloquent statement of the doctrine which I had long defended, and which I have called the religion of humanity. But, strange as it may seem, the moment I heard that doctrine from his lips, I felt an invincible repugnance to it, and saw, or thought I saw, at a glance, that it was unphilosophical and anti-religious.

Mr. Parker at that time was one of my highly prized personal friends, a young man, full of life and promise. There was no young man of my acquaintance for whom I had a higher regard, or from whom I hoped so much. He had very respectable intellectual ability, was learned, witty, and eloquent. His ideas were perhaps a little crude, and his taste needed a little chastening, but his fancy was lively, his imagination brilliant, and his rhetorical powers were of the first order. He had devoured an immense number of all sorts of books, and could discourse not badly on almost any subject. He was more brilliant than solid, less erudite than he appeared or was thought to be, and, in translating a work from the German of De Wette, made some sad blunders; but he was still young, and his attainments were unquestionably above the average standard of American scholarship. His powers of sarcasm and declamation were, however, superior to his powers as a reasoner, and his attachment to his own opinions was stronger than his love of truth. His greatest defect was lack of inherent loyalty. He would, perhaps, walk boldly to the dungeon, the scaffold, or the stake, in defence of the cause he had espoused, or an opinion he had once emitted, but he closed resolutely his mind, his heart, and his eyes to the reception of any light which might require him to revise and modify views to which he had once committed himself. He might be a fanatic, and die in defence of his opinions, but never a martyr to the truth, even in case it and his opinions should happen to coincide. He had the pride of the Stoic, but not the humility of the Christian. His boldness, firmness, courage, and inde-

pendence were striking, and would have deserved very high reverence, if they had been exhibited in the cause of truth, not simply in the cause of Mr. Theodore Parker. Nevertheless, he has not belied his early promise, and is undeniably one of the most distinguished Protestant ministers in the United States.

As soon as I listened to his Lectures, I perceived that, though we apparently held the same doctrines, there was and had been a radical difference between us. We had both, it is true, placed the origin and ground of religion in a religious sentiment natural to man; but while I made that sentiment the point of departure for proving that religion is in accordance with nature and reason, and therefore of removing what had been my chief difficulty in the way of accepting supernatural revelation, he made it his starting-point for reducing all religion to mere naturalism, or, as Carlyle calls it, "natural-supernaturalism," another name for downright pantheism, or rather, atheism. He held and applied it nakedly, in an unbelieving spirit; I held it in connection with many elements of my early traditional faith, and applied it in a believing spirit. When encountering the doctrine, he was in the access of his wrath against religion, or, as he said, "popular theology," produced by the reaction of his reason against Calvinism, in which he had been born and reared, and of his heart against the inefficiency and hollowness of the sleek and decorous morality which formed the burden of fashionable Unitarian preaching; and he seized upon it as an instrument for demolishing the Christian temple, overthrowing the altar of Christ, and of sweeping away the Bible, and all creeds, dogmas, forms, rites, and institutions of religion. He was mad at religion, and, as the *Sartor Resartus* would say, he wished to turn men in utter nakedness out into this bleak and wintry world, to rely on themselves alone, and to support themselves as best they might from their own native resources. But I had long since got through that stage in my disease, had long since subdued my wrath, and now longed to approach nearer and nearer to the Christian world, not to remove further and further from it. I had learned to loathe doubt, to have a horror of unbelief, and was ready to be an orthodox believer the moment that I could see my way to believe without violence to my human nature, or the abnegation of my reason.

I have already said it was not arguments for belief I

wanted, but the removal of the obstacles I encountered, or imagined I encountered, in the way of believing. Just in proportion as these were removed, Christian belief seemed to rise spontaneously in my heart and soul. The doctrine of the origin of religion in a religious sentiment natural to man, which in my mind had really meant no more than that religion is adapted to man's nature and meets an inherent want of his soul, had removed the most formidable of these obstacles, and placed me with my face towards Christianity. It had never been in my mind, in fact, either the origin or the ground of religion, but simply an answer to my principal objection to religion; and therefore I could and did include in religion more than I did or could deduce from it by a logical process. Mr. Parker, on the contrary, really made it the origin and ground of religion, the source and basis of all that he included in that term; and therefore with him it led legitimately and necessarily to sheer naturalism. He made it the basis of his theology, and therefore his theology became simply anthropology; I made it the basis of solving an objection to revelation, and therefore remained free to accept Christian theology. Each applied it according to his wants and tendencies of the moment.

But these distinctions I had not explicitly made before listening to Mr. Parker; yet, as soon as I looked at the doctrine in its nakedness, as he presented it, I saw that it could not support the superstructure which I had in my own mind erected; that, though it embodied a fact, an important fact, it could offer no foundation for real objective religious belief. So far as I had really built on it, my system was worth nothing, and was and could be only a vain effort to devise a religion without God, ending at best in mere soul-worship, or the worship of my own internal sentiments and affections projected. From the internal sentiment alone it is impossible to conclude the existence of any external object, for the sentiment, taken as sentiment, is only an affection or modification of the subject, and indistinguishable, substantially, from the subject itself. Philosophy has never yet discovered a passage from the subjective to the objective. Both must be given simultaneously, in one and the same intuition, or neither can be asserted. To make religion solely dependent on a sentiment natural to man, is to make it purely subjective, purely human, a development of human nature, and therefore to suppose a religion which presents no real object of worship, which implies no God, no obligation, or sense of

duty. This would be absurd; for religion, if religion there be, necessarily implies belief in God, and the recognition of our obligation to worship him. In it is embraced, as essential to its very existence, the idea of intercommunion between God and man, of object and subject, and it is denied the moment that you reduce it to the subject alone, or to the object alone; or, what is the same thing, identify as one in substance, God and man, object and subject. Never was language more grossly perverted than by Cousin, when he called the pantheist Spinoza religious, and made his errors flow from an excess of piety. The pantheism of Spinoza is as far removed from religion as the subjectivism of Kant, the egoism of Fichte, or the atheism of D'Holbach. Unless you can assert the two terms, God and man, as substantially distinct, or as two distinct substances, bearing to each other the relation of Creator and creature, Sovereign and subject, you cannot assert religion in any sense at all.

Mr. Parker, I saw, was right in his application of the doctrine, that religion originates in a sentiment natural to man, and that I must either go with him and reject all religion deserving the name, or seek the ground of religion elsewhere. This induced me to reëxamine what it was that I had really, thus far, made the basis of such religious belief as I had. In doing this, the vast importance and reach of the doctrine of Leroux, in regard to thought or life as the joint product of the intercommunion of subject and object, when applied to religion, began to dawn on my mind, and I made the applications of that doctrine which I have already set forth. I found, too, that I had never really built so exclusively on the doctrine of Benjamin Constant as in my mental confusion I had supposed, and that I had really approached in principle nearer to the Christian world than I had myself imagined. While admitting still the religious sentiment as in some sense natural to man, and therefore proving that man may be religious without violence to his nature, indeed, in harmony with it, I now explicitly rejected that sentiment as the origin and ground of religion, and denied that religion is simply the result of its development. I placed the origin and ground of religion in the relation of Creator and creature, of God and man, made known to man by God himself, and held it to be the infusion, through communion, of a supernatural life into natural human life. In this sense I reviewed Mr. Parker's Lectures, when pub-

lished in a volume. In reviewing the volume and refuting its pantheism, naturalism, or infidelity, I found myself advancing step by step towards real Christian belief. I was impressed, as I never had been before, with the utter insufficiency, the nothingness, of the system to which I had been more or less attached for nearly twenty years, and which, I must say, had never satisfied my reason. I caught glimpses of Christian truths which were to me both new and cheering, and I saw, though dimly as yet, that the deeper philosophy was with the orthodox, not with the heterodox. I began to discover that the doctrine of the church in the Catholic sense was far profounder and truer than the doctrine of no-church asserted by Dr. Channing and my Unitarian friends. I obtained the main conceptions of the church, and of her principal dogmas, which I have set forth in the foregoing chapter, and went so far as to assert the problem of our age is, "Catholicity without the papacy."

This problem I thought I could solve by my doctrine of life. My first step was to proclaim that doctrine, and the Catholicity it had led me to adopt. The great thing was to revive church principles, to induce people to regard the church as an organism, and to effect, if possible, the reunion of Christendom, now broken into fragments, not on a new church basis, but really on what had been the basis of the church from the beginning. Filled with this thought, I consented to become one of the editors of *The Christian World*, a new weekly journal, published by a brother of the late Dr. William Ellery Channing, and which I trusted to be able to make the organ of my views. I commenced in that journal a series of essays on *The Mission of Jesus*, which attracted no little attention. The design of these essays was to develop and apply to the explanation of Christianity my doctrine of life or communion. I did not in the outset see very clearly where I should land, but I hoped to do something to draw attention to the church as a living organism, and the medium through which the Son of God practically redeems, saves, or blesses mankind. The first and second essays pleased my Unitarian friends, the third drew forth a warm approbation from a Puritan journal, the fourth threw the Tractarians into ecstasies, and the *New York Churchman*, then edited by the well-known Dr. Seabury, announced in its prefatory remarks to some extracts it made from it, that a new era had dawned on the Puritan city of Boston; the fifth, sixth, and seventh attracted the

attention of the Catholic journals, which reproduced them, or portions of them, with approbatory remarks. The eighth, which was to answer the question, Which is the true church or body of Christ? the publisher of *The Christian World* refused to insert, and therefore was not published. A Catholic editor kindly offered me the use of his columns, but I respectfully declined his offer. The essay was the concluding one, and as I hesitated, and evaded a direct answer to the question raised, I was not sorry that I had a good excuse for not publishing it.

Till I commenced writing this series of essays, I had no thought of ever becoming a Roman Catholic; and it was not till I saw my articles copied into a Catholic journal, that even the possibility of such a termination of my researches presented itself to my mind. I found myself with my starting-point led by an invincible logic to assert the Catholic Church as the true church or living body of Christ. To be logical, I saw I must accept that church, and accept her as authoritative for natural reason, and then take her own explanation of herself and of her doctrines as true. All my principles required me, and my first impulse, in the enthusiasm of the moment, was, to do it; yet I hesitated, and it was over a year before I made up my mind to submit myself to her instructions and directions.

My doctrine of life or communion did not include in itself, as I supposed, the whole of Catholicity; but, in assuming it to be true, and a fair expression of the rational elements of Catholic theology, there was no great error. It did not bring me into the Catholic Church, but it did bring me to the recognition of those great principles, which, taken in connection with the unquestioned historical facts in the case, required me either to renounce my reason, or go further and accept the church and her doctrines, in her own sense, not merely in the sense in which I had asserted them in my philosophy. But this I was not at once prepared to do; and for the first time in my life I refused to follow out my principles, so long as I held them, and to accept their last consequences.

I have been accused of precipitancy and rashness in submitting myself to the Catholic Church, but the fact is that I betrayed inexcusable weakness in not submitting to her much sooner than I did. I was quite willing to accept the church in the abstract, and defend, in a general way, Catholicity as I understood it; but I had so long been accustomed

to consider the claims of the present Catholic Church as out of the question, that I found it difficult to make up my mind to accept them. I was unwilling to believe that the Reformation had had no reason against her, and that the whole Protestant movement had been wholly wrong from the beginning. I was not prepared either in words or deeds to condemn outright the whole Protestant world, so large a portion of mankind, and that, as I had been accustomed to believe, the more moral, enlightened, and energetic portion. I had formed but a poor opinion of Roman Catholics, and was far from being willing to cast in my lot with them. I had, indeed, few Catholic acquaintances, and had only Protestant representation from which to form my opinion, but I had not as yet learned to question the substantial truthfulness of those representations. One or two modern Catholic controversial works had fallen in my way, and I had attempted to read them, but they did not impress me favorably. They were written, as I thought, in a dry, feeble, and unattractive style, and abounded with terms and locutions which were to me totally unintelligible. Their authors seemed to me ignorant of the ideas and wants of the non-Catholic world, engrossed with obsolete questions, and wanting in broad and comprehensive views. Their method of arguing struck me as mere special pleading, turning on mere technicalities and verbal distinctions, evading the real merits of the questions debated, and puzzling rather than convincing the reason of their opponents. They struck me as cunning, as subtile, as adroit disputants, not as great, broad, or open-hearted men, who win at once your confidence in their intelligence and sincerity, and in the truth and honesty of their cause; and, in point of fact, Catholic controversialists are generally regarded by Protestants very much in the light I regarded them, that is, of lawyers speaking from their brief. This, however, it is only fair to say, is not the fault of the Catholic party.

Then I had been accustomed to regard the Catholic nations of Europe, since the time of Leo X., as unprogressive, and the mass of their populations as ignorant, degraded, enslaved, cowardly, and imbecile. I found Catholics, I thought, at the head of none of the great intellectual, political, social, literary, or scientific movements of the age. The great, energetic nations of the day were the non-Catholic nations, Great Britain, Russia, and the United States. Even in so-called Catholic nations the ruling or governing

mind had ceased to be Catholic. The majority of the French population were Catholic, but intellectual, literary, scientific, political France was non-Catholic. The great French philosophers, writers, thinkers, those who directed the mind of the kingdom and represented it to foreigners, were far enough from being attached to the church. French journalism was, almost without exception, anti-Catholic. The men who made the old revolution, rejected the church, and instituted the reign of terror, were but a small minority of the nation, and yet what availed the opposition of the Catholic masses against them? So in every Catholic state, power, learning, science, energy, is in the hands of non-Catholics, and the Catholic portion, though the immense majority, are governed by the non-Catholic minority. Where, I asked, is the Catholic who takes, in any nation, the lead in any branch of literature or science? I did not attribute, I could not attribute, this supposed inferiority of Catholics to nature or to Catholicity, but to the mistaken policy of the Catholic clergy, who must have lost the deeper sense of their religion, become men of routine, and incapable of comprehending or meeting the wants of the age. Trained up in scrupulous ignorance of the world, in a superannuated scholasticism, they were unfitted to act on the age, and to take the direction of the great movements of the race. Finding the intelligence of the age against them, they had set their faces against intelligence; finding efforts to extend freedom, and to carry on the progress of man and society directed by their enemies, they had condemned those efforts, thrown themselves on the side of absolutism, and labored to keep the masses in ignorance and slavery, that they might keep them in the faith. Taking this view, and only partially understanding its explanation, how could I but shrink from uniting with the present Catholic Church?

Nor was this all. To pass from one Protestant sect to another is a small affair, and is little more than going from one apartment to another in the same house. We remain still in the same world, in the same general order of thought, and in the midst of the same friends and associates. We do not go from the known to the unknown; we are still within soundings, and may either return, if we choose, to the sect we have left, or press on to another, without serious loss of reputation, or any gross disturbance of our domestic and social relations. But to pass from Protestantism to Catholicity is a very different thing. We break with the whole

world in which we have hitherto lived; we enter into what is to us a new and untried region, and we fear the discoveries we may make there, when it is too late to draw back. To the Protestant mind this old Catholic Church is veiled in mystery, and leaves ample room to the imagination to people it with all manner of monsters, chimeras, and hydras dire. We enter it, and leave no bridge over which we may return. It is a committal for life, for eternity. To enter it seemed to me, like taking a leap in the dark; and it is not strange that I recoiled, and set my wits to work to find out, if possible, some compromise, some middle ground on which I could be faithful to my Catholic tendencies without uniting myself with the present Roman Catholic Church.

I had, indeed, found the church as authoritative for natural reason, but I had not established her absolute infallibility; at least I did not see that I had. The divine-human life which constituted the church and was its informing principle, was indeed infallible, but as we received this life only by communion with those who live it, and as, according to the philosophy I then held, it is the subject that determines the form of the life or fact of consciousness, I could well concede that more or less of error might find its way into the concrete conceptions even of Catholics; and as I had as yet failed to recognize the office of the papacy, and supposed the infallibility of the pope a doctrine which no enlightened Catholic accepted, for all the Catholics and Catholic books I was acquainted with took good care to state that it was no article of faith, I might, without any very great inconsistency, hold that the Catholic Church had committed some mistakes, and impaired her divine-human life. I had long been convinced that the church in communion with the see of Rome had been the true body of Christ down to the age of Leo X., and I regarded the apostolic see as the central source of the Christian life; but the body seemed to me to have been broken into fragments, and to exist no longer in its integrity. The Roman Catholic Church was undoubtedly the larger fragment, the one through which the main current of the divine-human life continued to flow; but no man would dare say that nothing of that life is or can be lived outside of her communion, and I had found no Catholic that held there could be absolutely no salvation outside of it. The several sects, when broken off, retained a certain amount of Christian life,—that amount which Christendom had already assimilated; as is evident the moment you com-

pare a Christian of any sect with a pagan, a Mahometan, or any man born and living outside of Christian civilization. Moreover, all communion of the sects with one another, and even with the Roman Church, has not been absolutely interrupted. There is more or less even of personal intercourse between them, and, besides, there is intercommunion through similar laws and institutions, and through a common literature and science. They all belong, in some sort, to one and the same family, and all, in a measure, live the one life of Christ. Though the divisions, separations, and schisms greatly enfeeble it, they do not absolutely extinguish it at once; they only weaken it, and prepare by evil communications its final extinction. The real difficulty is not that the Christian world does not live the life at all, but that it does not live it in its unity and fulness. Undoubtedly they who are attached to the Roman Catholic fragment have the advantage; but, instead of uniting ourselves with them, we should labor, from the point where Providence has placed us, to effect in the surest and speediest manner possible the reunion of all the fragments, and thus restore the body of Christ to its original unity and integrity.

Here I came for a moment in contact with the so-called Oxford or Tractarian movement. I never for a moment seriously contemplated joining the Anglican communion, and, regarded in itself, Puseyism had no attractions for me. It was far better to go at once to Rome than to Oxford. But I looked upon the movement as one of great importance. It was a promising sign of the times, as indicating a tendency on the part of a large portion of the Protestant world to return to church principles. It would be a great mistake to suppose that the Oxford movement was confined to the bosom of the Anglican communion. An analogous movement was perceptible in the bosom of every sect. Even in the Roman Catholic communion, there was a return towards higher and more living church principles than those contended for in the eighteenth century, when a Bergier combats the Encyclopedists and defends Catholicity on principles borrowed from an infidel philosophy. In every Protestant sect there was in 1842 a movement party, at war with the fundamental principle of Protestantism, and demanding church union and church authority. It seemed that Protestantism had culminated, that the work of disintegration and destruction had gone so far that it could go no further, and that a reaction in earnest, and not

likely to be suspended, had commenced through the whole Christian world against the Protestant reformation. The letters, which I was constantly receiving from prominent Protestant ministers of the more important and influential sects, denouncing the reformation as a blunder, asserting the necessity of reuniting the Protestant world with the Catholic, was to me a proof of it. The secret history of my own country for several years prior to 1844, would reveal a Catholic reaction in the more serious portion of the Protestant sects, that would surprise those who look only on the surface of things. I was aware of this reaction, and I hoped from it the union of Christendom. The thing to be done was to encourage this reaction, to strengthen it, and by bringing out, each one from his own stand-point, true church principles, to catholicize the several Protestant sects, and prepare them for reunion with the Catholic Church in a body.

With this view I greeted Puseyism as the most important movement of the times, and was from my stand-point as a Congregational Unitarian, prepared to coöperate with it, as well as with analogous movements elsewhere, and in the bosom of other communions. In order to do this, having for the year 1843 discontinued my *Review*, I started another Quarterly, which I still continue. I started it under my own name, and as the organ of my own views, but with the real aim of contributing my share towards effecting the reunion of Christendom by expounding and defending the Catholicity to which my doctrine of life or communion had conducted me. I was then forty years of age, in the full vigor of mind and body, and had won for myself a respectable position in the American literary world, as the list of names voluntarily sent in as subscribers to the new *Review* immediately on the appearance of the first number fully proved. I was warmly greeted in quarters where I had hitherto been only denounced or not recognized, and felt that, for the first time in my life, I had the sentiments of the better portion of the community with me. But I soon found it difficult to maintain my independent position, or to defend the theory on which I was acting. The Roman Catholics looked on, but said little; several of their clergy, as I have since learned, said Mass for my conversion, and many, I have no doubt, in their prayers recommended me to our Lady. The Puseyites thought I leaned too much to Rome, and was encouraging her in her pretensions. My Unitarian friends thought I was too Orthodox, too strenu-

ous for authority, and that I allowed too little scope to individual reason; and, what was more to the purpose, I was dissatisfied with myself. My position, asserting the church and the necessity of communion with her as the condition of living the life of Christ, and yet really standing aloof from all communions, belonging in fact to no church, struck me the moment I began to consider it, as anomalous, nay, as untenable. Was I living the Christian life myself? If so, what was the value of my reasoning in behalf of the reunion of Christendom, and of communion with the body of Christ? If not, if I was not living that life myself, what were in fact my own personal condition and my future prospects? Suppose I die before I have effected the reunion of Christendom—what will become of my own soul? I am engaged in a good work, but what if I become myself a castaway? Here is matter for serious thought.

CHAPTER XVIII.—BECOME A CATHOLIC.

The work of conversion is, of course, the work of grace, and without grace no man can come into the church any more than he can enter heaven. No merely human process does or can suffice for it, and I am far enough from pretending that I became a Catholic by my own unassisted efforts. Without the grace divinely bestowed, and bestowed without any merit of mine, all my labors would have been in vain. It was divine grace that conducted me, rolled back the darkness before me, and inclined my heart to believe. But grace does not exclude reason, or voluntary coöperation; and conversion itself, though a work of free grace, includes, inasmuch as it is the conversion of a rational subject, a rational process, though not always distinctly noted by the convert. All I am doing is to detail the rational process by which, not without, but with divine grace, I came into the church, and that not for those who are within, but for those who are without. Those who are within have no need in their own case of the process, for they have the life, and the life evidences itself, and they know in whom they believe, and are certain. But this sort of evidence they who are without have not, and we cannot allege it as evidence to them. They could take it only on our word, and they have no more reason to take our word than they have to take that of Evangelicals, who pretend to the same sort of evidence in their favor. It is necessary, therefore, to show them that there is

a rational process included in the case, and to show them as clearly as may be what that process is.

The process I have detailed, or life by communion, did not, as I have said, bring me into the church, but, taken in connection with the admitted historical facts in the case, it did remove all my *a priori* objections, and bring me to the recognition of the church as authoritative, by virtue of the divine-human life it lived, for natural reason. This was not all that I needed, but it was much, and required me to go further and submit myself to her, and take her own explanation of herself and of her dogmas. I saw this clear enough, but my reluctance to become a Roman Catholic prevented me from doing so at once. Yet, even from the first, even from the moment I came to the recognition of the church as authoritative, I felt, though I refused personally to change my position, that I must take what had evidently been her positive teaching for my guide, and in no instance contradict it.

It was evident, without any special instruction, that the church, that the whole Christian world, proposed a very different end as the true end of life, from the one I had proposed to myself, and for which, during nearly twenty years, in my feeble way, I had been laboring. As a practical fact, the church, no doubt, really does aid the progress of society, and tend to give us a heaven even on earth, but this is not the end she proposes, or what she directly aims to effect. The end she proposes is not attainable in this world, and the heaven she points to is a reward to be received only after this life. There could be no doubt that she taught endless beatitude as the reward of the good, and endless misery as the punishment of the wicked. The good are they who in this world live the life of Christ, the wicked are they who live it not, and even refuse to live it. There needs no church or priest to tell me that I am not living that life, and that, if I die as I am, I shall assuredly go to hell. Now as I have no wish to go to hell, something must be done, and done without delay.

It is all very well, no doubt, to follow the example of the weeping Isis, and seek to gather up the fragments of the torn body of our Lord, and restore it to its unity and integrity; but what will it avail me if I remain severed from that body, and refuse to do what the church commands? How can I consistently ask the obedience of others while I refuse my own? Rewards and punishments are personal,

and meted out to men as individuals, not as collective bodies. There is, then, but one rational course for me to take, that of going to the church, and begging her to take charge of me, and do with me what she judges proper. As the Roman Catholic Church is clearly the church of history, the only church that can have the slightest historical claim to be regarded as the body of Christ, it is to her I must go, and her teachings, as given through her pastors, that I must accept as authoritative for natural reason. It was, no doubt, unpleasant to take such a step, but to be eternally damned would, after all, be a great deal unpleasanter. Accordingly, with fear and trembling, and yet with firmness of purpose, in the last week of May, 1844, I sought an interview with the late Right Reverend Benedict Joseph Fenwick, the learned Bishop of Boston, and in the following week visited him again, avowed my wish to become a Catholic, and begged him to be so kind as to introduce me to some one who would take the trouble to instruct me, and prepare me for reception, if found worthy, into the communion of the church. He immediately introduced me to his coadjutor, who has succeeded him, the Right Reverend John Bernard Fitzpatrick. Of Bishop Fenwick, who died in the peace of the Lord, August 12, 1846, and who has left a memory precious to the American church, I have given, in my *Review* for the following October, a sketch to which I can add nothing, and from which I have nothing to abate. He was a native of Maryland, descended from an old Catholic family that came over with the first settlers of the colony, and to whom the American church is indebted for some of her brightest ornaments. He was a great and good man, a man of various and solid learning, a tender heart, unaffected piety, and untiring zeal in his ministry. Delicacy and his own retiring character prevent me from speaking of his successor, the present Bishop of Boston, in the terms which naturally present themselves. He was my instructor, my confessor, my spiritual director, and my personal friend, for eleven years; my intercourse with him was intimate, cordial, and affectionate, and I owe him more than it is possible for me to owe any other man. I have met men of more various erudition and higher scientific attainments; I have met men of bolder fancy and more creative imaginations; but I have never met a man of a clearer head, a firmer intellectual grasp, a sounder judgment, or a warmer heart. He taught me my catechism and my theology; and, though I have

found men who made a far greater display of theological erudition, I have never met an abler or sounder theologian. However for a moment I may have been attracted by one or another theological school, I have invariably found myself obliged to come back at last to the views he taught me. If my *Review* has any theological merit, if it has earned any reputation as a stanch and uncompromising defender of the Catholic faith, that merit is principally due, under God, to him, to his instructions, to his advice, to his encouragement, and his uniform support. Its faults, its shortcomings, or its demerits, are my own. I know that, in saying this, I offend his modesty, his unaffected Christian humility; but less I could not say without violence to my own feelings, the deep reverence, the warm love, and profound gratitude with which I always recall, and trust I always shall recall his name and his services to me.

Bishop Fitzpatrick received me with civility, but with a certain degree of distrust. He had been a little prejudiced against me, and doubted the motives which led so proud and so conceited a man, as he regarded me, to seek admission into the communion of the church. It was two or three months before we could come to a mutual understanding. There was a difficulty in the way that I did not dare explain to him, and he instinctively detected in me a want of entire frankness and unreserve. I had been led to the church by the application I had made of my doctrine of life by communion, and I will own that I thought that I found in it a method of leading others to the church which Catholics had overlooked or neglected to use. I really thought that I had made some philosophical discoveries which would be of value even to Catholic theologians in convincing and converting unbelievers, and I dreaded to have them rejected by the Catholic Bishop. But I perceived almost instantly that he either was ignorant of my doctrine of life, or placed no confidence in it; and I felt that he was far more likely, bred as he had been in a different philosophical school from myself, to oppose than to accept it. I had indeed, however highly I esteemed the doctrine, no special attachment to it for its own sake, and could, so far as it was concerned, give it up at a word, without a single regret; but, if I rejected or waived it, what reason had I for regarding the church as authoritative for natural reason, or for recognizing any authority in the Bishop himself to teach me? Here was the difficulty.

This difficulty remained a good while. I dared not state it, lest the Catholic Bishop himself should deprive me of all reason for becoming a Catholic, and send me back into the world utterly naked and destitute. I had made up my mind that the church was my last plank of safety, that it was communion with the church or death. I must be a Catholic, and yet could not and would not be one blindly. I had gone it blind once, and had lost all, and would not do so again. My trouble was great, and the Bishop could not relieve me, for I dared not disclose to him its source. But Providence did not desert me; and I soon discovered that there was another method, by which, even waiving the one which I had thus far followed, I could arrive at the authority of the church, and prove, even in a clearer and more direct manner, her divine commission to teach all men and nations in all things pertaining to eternal salvation. This new process or method I found was as satisfactory to reason as my own. I adopted it, and henceforth used it as the rational basis of my argument for the church. So, in point of fact, I was not received into the church on the strength of the philosophical doctrine I had embraced, but on the strength of another, and, perhaps, a more convincing process.

It is not necessary to develop this new process here, for it is the ordinary process adopted by Catholic theologians, and may be found drawn out at length in almost every modern course of theology. It may, also, be found developed under some of its aspects in almost any article I have since written in my *Review*, but more especially in an article entitled *The Church against No-Church*. I found it principally in Billuart's treatises *de Deo*, *de Fide*, *de Regulis Fidei*, and *de Ecclesia;* and an excellent summary and lucid statement of it, or what are usually called "motives of credibility," may be found in Pointer's *Evidences of Christianity*, and also in the *Evidences of Catholicity*, by Dr. Spalding, the present able and learned Bishop of Louisville. Though I accepted this method and was satisfied by it before I entered the church, yet it was not that by which I was brought from unbelief to the church; and it only served to justify and confirm by another process the convictions to which I had been brought by my application to history and the traditions of the race, of the doctrine of life obtained from the simple analysis of thought as a fact of consciousness. What would have been its practical effect on my

mind, had I encountered it before I had in fact become a believer and in reality had no need of it for my personal conviction, I am unable to say, though I suspect it would never have brought me to the church,—not because it is not logical, not because it is not objectively complete and conclusive, but because I wanted the internal or subjective disposition to understand and receive it. It would not have found, if I may so say, the needed subjective response, and would have failed to remove to my understanding the *a priori* objections I entertained to a supernatural authoritative revelation itself. It would, I think, have struck me as crushing instead of enlightening, silencing instead of convincing, my reason. Certainly, I have never found the method effectual in the case of any non-Catholic not already disposed to become a Catholic, or actually, in his belief, on the way to the church.

The argument of our theologians is scholastic, severe, and conclusive for the pure intellect that is in the condition to listen to it; but it seems to me better adapted, practically, to confirm believers and guard them against the specious objections of their enemies, than to convince unbelievers. Man is not pure intellect; he is body as well as soul, and full of prejudices and passions. His subjective objections are more weighty than his objective objections, and the main difficulties of the unbeliever lie, in our times, further back than the ordinary motives of credibility reach. It strikes me that my method, though it can by no means supersede theirs, might be advantageously used as a preparation for theirs; not as an Evangelical Preparation, but as a preparation for the usual Evangelical Preparation presented by theologians, especially in this age when the objections are drawn from philosophy rather than from history, from feeling rather than from logic.

Having, however, found the other method of justifying my recognition of the church as authority for reason, I dropped for the time the doctrine of life, and soon came, without any discussion of its merits or demerits, to a good understanding with the Bishop, who, after a few weeks of further instruction, heard my confession, which included the whole period of my life from the time of my joining the Presbyterians, received my abjuration, administered to me conditional Baptism, and the sacrament of Confirmation, on Sunday, October 20, 1844, when I had just entered the forty-second year of my age, and just twenty-two years

after I had joined the Presbyterians. The next morning at early Mass I received Holy Communion from the hands of Rev. Nicholas A. O'Brien, then Pastor of the Church in East Boston. The great step had been taken, and I had entered upon a new life, subdued indeed, but full of a sweet and calm joy. No difficulties with regard to the particular doctrines of the church had at any time arisen, for, satisfied that Almighty God had commissioned the church to teach, and that the Holy Ghost was ever present by his supernatural aid to assist her to teach, I knew that she could never teach any thing but truth. The fact that she taught a doctrine was a sufficient reason for accepting it, and I had only to be assured of her teaching it, in order to believe it.

As I did not make use in the last moment of my doctrine of communion, and as I had no occasion for it afterwards for my own mind, I made no further use of it; and when I addressed the public again, proceeded to defend my Catholic faith by the method ordinarily adopted by Catholic writers. I did this, because, seeing the Catholic Church and her dogmas to be infinitely more than that doctrine had enabled me to conceive, I attached for the moment no great importance to it. It certainly was not all I had supposed it, and it might prove to be nothing at all. It had served as a scaffolding, but now the temple was completed, it might serve only to obscure its beauty and fair proportions. At any rate, that and other philosophical theories which I had formed while yet unacquainted with the church, should be suffered to sleep, till I had time and opportunity to reëxamine them in the light of Catholic faith and theology. It did not comport with the modesty and humility of a recent convert to be intruding theories of his own upon the Catholic public, or to insist on methods of defending Catholic doctrine, adopted while he was a non-Catholic, and not recognized by Catholic theologians. Was it likely I had discovered any thing of value that had escaped the great theologians and doctors of the church?

But this suppression of my own philosophic theory,—a suppression under every point of view commendable and even necessary at the time, became the occasion of my being placed in a false position towards my non-Catholic friends. Many had read me, seen well enough whither I was tending, and were not surprised to find me professing myself a Catholic. The doctrine I brought out, and which they had followed, appeared to them, as it did to me, to authorize me

to do so, and perhaps not a few of them were making up their minds to follow me; but they were thrown all aback the first time they heard me speaking as a Catholic, by finding me defending my conversion on grounds of which I had given no public intimation, and which seemed to them wholly unconnected with those I had published. Unable to perceive any logical or intellectual connection between my last utterances before entering the church and my first utterances afterwards, they looked upon my conversion, after all, as a sudden caprice, or rash act taken from a momentary impulse or in a fit of intellectual despair, for which I had in reality no good reason to offer. So they turned away in disgust, and refused to trouble themselves any longer with the reasonings of one on whom so little reliance could be placed, and who could act without any rational motive for his action.

Evidently this was unpleasant, but I could not set the matter right at the time, by showing that there really had been a continuity in my intellectual life, and that I had not broken with my former self so abruptly or so completely as they supposed. Till I had had time to review my past writings in the light of my new faith, the matter was uncertain in my own mind, and it was my duty, so far as the public was concerned, to let the doctrine sleep, and to write and publish nothing but what I had a warrant for in the approved writers of the church. I acted prudently, as it was proper I should act, and I should continue to do so still, and not have written the present book and taken up the connecting link, had not nearly thirteen years of Catholic experience and study enabled me to perceive that the doctrine of life I asserted is in no way incompatible with any Catholic principle or doctrine I have become acquainted with, and that it did legitimately lead me to the Catholic Church. I do not mean that, as a doctrine of philosophy, it bridges over the gulf between the natural and supernatural, for that no philosophy can do, since philosophy is only the expression of natural reason; but I honestly believe, as I believed in 1844, that it does, better than any other philosophical doctrine, show the harmony between the natural and the supernatural, and remove those obstacles to the reception of the church, and her doctrines on her authority, which all intelligent and thinking men brought up outside of the church in our day do really encounter. I believe I am not only clearing myself of an unfounded suspicion of

having acted capriciously, from mental instability, or mental despair, in joining the church, which were a small affair, but also a real service to a large class of minds who still remember me, by recalling it and showing them that in substance I still hold and cherish it.

My Catholic friends cannot look upon my doing so, after years of probation, as indicative of any departure from the diffidence and humility which at first restrained me from putting it forth. The doctrine is new only in form, not in substance, and is only a development and application of principles which every Catholic theologian does and must hold. The fact that it was first developed and applied by one outside of the church, and served to bring him to the church, since it is not repugnant to any principle of Catholic faith or theology, is rather in its favor, for it creates a presumption that it really contains something fitted to reach a certain class of minds at least, and to remove the obstacles they experience in yielding assent to the claims of the church. Non-Catholics do not, indeed, know Catholicity as well as Catholics know it, but they know better their own objections to it, and what is necessary to remove them. If, in investigating questions before them, in attempting to establish a system of their own, with no thought of seeking either to believe Catholicity, or to find an answer to the objections they feel to the church, they find these objections suddenly answered, and themselves forced, by principles which they have adopted, to recognize the church as authority for reason, it is good evidence that these principles, and the methods of reasoning they authorize, are well adapted to the purpose of the defenders of the faith, and not unworthy of the attention of Catholic controversialists, when, as in my case, they neither supersede nor interfere with the ordinary methods of theologians.

Motives of credibility or methods of proof should be adapted to the peculiar character and wants of the age, or class of persons addressed. Philosophy could never have attained to Christian revelation, or the sacred mysteries of our holy religion; but now that the revelation is made, that the mysteries are revealed, we know that all sound philosophy does and must accord with them,—must, as far as it goes, prepare the mind to receive them; and taken in connection with the historical facts in the case, must demand them as its own complement. Now, if I am not mistaken, a philosophy of this sort has become indispensable. The age is

sceptical, I grant, but its scepticism relates rather to the prevailing philosophy than to reason, of which that philosophy professes to be the exponent. It distrusts reasoning rather than reason. It has no confidence in the refinements and subtilties of schoolmen, and, though often sophistical, it is in constant dread of being cheated out of its wits by the sophistry of the practised logician. Conclusions in matters of religion, which are arrived at only by virtue of a long train of reasoning, even when it perceives no defects in the premises and no flaw in the reasoning, do not command its assent, for it fears there may still be something wrong either in the reasoning or the premises, which escapes its sagacity. The ordinary motives of credibility do not move non-Catholics to believe, because these motives start from principles which they do not accept, or accept with so much vagueness and uncertainty, that they do not serve to warrant assent even to strictly logical conclusions drawn from them. Moreover, they do not reach their peculiar difficulties, do not touch their real objections; and though they seem overwhelming to Catholics, they leave all their objections remaining in full force, and their inability to believe undiminished.

The reason is in the fact that the philosophy which prevails, and after which the modern mind is, in some sense, moulded, is opposed to Christian revelation, and does not recognize as fundamental the principles or premises which warrant the conclusions drawn in favor of Christianity. The prevalent philosophy with very nearly the whole scientific culture of the age, is not only unchristian, but antichristian, and, if accepted, renders the Christian faith an impossibility for a logical mind. There is always lurking in the mind a suspicion of the antecedent improbability of the whole Evangelical doctrine. Apologists may say, and say truly, that there is and can be no contradiction between philosophy and faith; but, unhappily, the philosophy between which and faith there is no contradiction, is not generally recognized. Between the official and prevalent philosophy of the day, between the principles which have passed from that philosophy into the general mind, and Catholic faith, there is a contradiction; and not a few Catholics even retain their faith only in spite of their philosophy. The remedy is in revising our philosophy, and in placing it in harmony with the great principles of Catholic faith. I will not say with Bonnetty that the method of the scholastics leads to rational-

ism and infidelity, for that is not true; but I will say that that method, as developed and applied in the modern world, especially the non-Catholic world, does not serve as a preamble to faith, and does place the mind of the unbeliever in a state unfitted to give to the ordinary motives of credibility their due weight, or any weight at all.

Modern philosophy is mainly a method, and develops a method of reasoning instead of presenting principles to intellectual contemplation. It takes up the question of method before that of principles, and seeks by the method to determine the principles, instead of leaving the principles to determine the method. Hence it becomes simply a doctrine of science, *Wissenschaftslehre*, a doctrine of abstractions, or pure mental conceptions, instead of being, as it should be, a doctrine of reality, of things divine and human. It is cold, lifeless, and offers only dead forms, which satisfy neither the intellect nor the heart. It does not, and cannot move the mind towards life and reality. It obscures first principles, and impairs the native force and truthfulness of the intellect. The evil can be remedied only by returning from this philosophy of abstractions,—from modern psychology, or subjectivism, to the philosophy of reality, the philosophy of life, which presents to the mind the first principles of life and of all knowledge as identical.

Herein is the value of the process by which I arrived at the church. I repeat, again and again, that philosophy did not conduct me into the church, but, just in proportion as I advanced towards a sound philosophy, I did advance towards the church. As I gained a real philosophy, a philosophy which takes its principles from the order of being, from life, from things as they are or exist, instead of the abstractions of the schools, faith flowed in, and I seized with joy and gladness the Christian Church and her dogmas. The non-Catholic world is far less in love with heresy or infidelity than is commonly supposed, and our arguments, clear and conclusive as they are to us, fail because they fail to meet their objections, and convince their reason. They are not addressed to reason as it is developed in them, and answer not their objections as they themselves apprehend them. The non-Catholic world is not deficient in logical force or mental acuteness, but it expresses itself in broad generalizations, rather than in precise and exact statements. Its objections are inductions from particulars, vaguely apprehended and loosely expressed, are more subjective

than objective, and rarely admit of a rigid scientific statement or definition. To define them after the manner of the schools, and to reduce them to a strictly logical formula, is, in most cases, to refute them; but the non-Catholic is not thus convinced that they are untenable, for he feels them still remaining in his mind. He attributes their apparent refutation to some logical sleight-of-hand, or dialectic jugglery, which escapes his detection. He remains unconvinced, because his objection has been met by a refutation which has given no new light to his understanding, nor made him see any higher or broader principles than he was before in possession of.

An external refutation of the unbeliever's objections effects nothing, because the real objection is internal, and the refutation leaves the internal as it was before. The secret of convincing is not to put error out of the mind, but truth into it. There is little use in arguing against the objections of non-Catholics, or in laboring directly for their refutation. We can effectually remove them only by correcting the premises from which the unbeliever reasons, and giving him first principles, which really enlighten his reason, and, as they become operative, expel his error by their own light and force. This can be done only by bringing the age back, or up to a philosophy which conforms the order of knowledge to the order of being, the logical order to the order of reality, and gives the first principles of things as the first principles of science. If Catholicity be from God, it does and must conform to the first principles of things, to the order of reality, to the laws of life or intelligence; and hence, a philosophy which conforms to the same order will conform to Catholicity, and supply all the rational elements of Catholic theology. Such a philosophy is the desideratum of the age, and we must have it, not as a substitute for faith, but as its preamble, as its handmaid, or we cannot recall the non-believing world to the church of God; because it is only by such a philosophy that we can really enlighten the mind of the unbeliever, and really and effectually remove his objections, or show that it is in fact true that there is no contradiction between Catholicity and philosophy.

The greatest and most serious difficulty in the way of the unbeliever is his inability to reconcile faith and reason, that is, the divine plan in the order of grace with the divine plan evident in the order of nature. The Christian order appears

to him as an after-thought, as an anomaly, if not a contradiction, to the general plan of divine providence, incompatible with the perfections of God, which we must admit, if we admit a God at all. It strikes him as unforeseen, and not contemplated by the divine mind in the original intention to create, and as brought in to remedy the defects of creation, or to make amends for an unexpected and deplorable failure. The two orders, again, seem to stand apart, and to imply a dualism, in fact, an antagonism, which it is impossible to reconcile with the unity and perfections of God. If God is infinite in all his attributes, in wisdom, power, and goodness, why did he not make nature perfect, or all he desired it, in the beginning, so as to have no need to interfere to repair, or to amend it, or to create a new order in its place, or even to preserve it, and avert its total ruin? It is of no use to decry such thoughts and questions as irreverent, as impious, as blasphemous; for they arise spontaneously in the unbelieving mind, and denunciation will not suppress them. It will serve no purpose to bring in here the ordinary motives of credibility, drawn from the wants of nature, the insufficiency of reason, prophesies, miracles, and historical monuments, for these only create new and equally grave difficulties. What is wanted is not argument, but instruction and explanation. It is necessary to show, not merely assert, that the two orders are not mutually antagonistic; that one and the same principle of life runs through them both; that they correspond one to the other, and really constitute but two parts of one comprehensive whole, and are equally embraced in the original plan and purpose of God in creating. God could have created man, had he chosen, in a state of pure nature; but in point of fact he did not, and nature has never for a single instant existed as pure nature. It has, from the first moment of its existence, been under a supernatural providence; and even if man had not sinned, there would still have been a sufficient reason for the Incarnation, to raise human nature to union with God, to make it the nature of God, and to enable us, through its elevation, to enjoy endless beatitude in heaven.

The doctrine that all dependent life is life by communion of the subject with the object, shows that this is possible, shows the common principle of the two orders, and thus prepares the mind to receive and yield to the arguments drawn from the wants of nature, the insufficiency of

reason, prophecies, miracles, and historical monuments; for it shows these to be in accordance with the original intent of the Creator, and that these wants and this insufficiency are wants and insufficiency, not in relation to the purely natural order, but in relation to the supernatural. Natural reason is sufficient for natural reason, but it is not sufficient for man; for man was intended from the beginning to live simultaneously in two orders, the one natural and the other supernatural.

Taking into consideration the fact that the scepticism of our age lies further back than the ordinary motives of credibility extend, further back than did the sceptieism our ancestors had to meet, and shows itself under a different form, I believe the process by which I was conducted towards the church is not only a legitimate process in itself, but one which, in these times, in abler hands than mine, may be adopted with no little advantage. The present non-Catholic mind has as much difficulty in admitting the motives of credibility, as usually urged, as it has in accepting Christianity without them. Prior to adducing them, we must, it seems to me, prepare the way for them, by rectifying our philosophy, and giving to our youth a philosophical doctrine which reproduces the order of things, of reality, of life; not merely an order of dead abstractions. Such a philosophy, I think, will be found in that which underlies the process I have detailed; and I hope it is no presumption or lack of modesty on my part, to recommend it to the attention of the schools, as well as to the consideration of all whose office or vocation it is to combat the unbelief of the age and country.

CHAPTER XIX.—BELIEF ON AUTHORITY.

If I have made myself understood by the reader who has had the patience or the courtesy to follow me thus far, he will perceive that my submission to authority on becoming a Catholic was very different from that which I yielded when I became a Presbyterian. In becoming a Presbyterian, I abandoned the use of reason; in becoming a Catholic, I used my reason. In the one case, I submitted because I despaired of reason; in the other, because I confided in it. The act of submitting to Presbyterianism was a rash act, an irrational act, an act of folly; because no man either can or should divest himself of reason, the essential and characteristic element of his nature; and

because I neither had nor asked any proof that the Presbyterian Church had been instituted by our Lord, and commissioned by him to teach me. All the objections usually urged against believing on authority, were valid against my act of submission to Presbyterianism. But my act of submission to the Catholic Church was an intelligent, a reasonable act; an act of reason, though indeed of reason assisted by grace, because I had full evidence of the fact that she is God's church, founded and sustained by him, and endowed with the authority and the ability to teach me in all things pertaining to salvation. I had proof satisfactory to reason, that God had himself instituted her as the medium of communion between him and men. To Presbyterianism I submitted blindly, without a sufficient reason; to the Catholic Church, with my eyes open, with full light, because I had ample reason to believe that the authority I submitted to could not err, and because her authority, while it obliges, convinces.

To all the Presbyterian doctrines my reason was opposed, and, in following it, I should not only not have believed them, but should have positively disbelieved them. To the Catholic doctrines I had no *a priori* objections, and reason, if unable of herself alone to accept them, had nothing to oppose to them. Presbyterianism contradicted reason; Catholicity was above reason indeed, but still in accordance with it, and, therefore, credible without violence to reason or nature. In becoming a Presbyterian, I had to surrender common-sense, and give up my natural beliefs and convic tions; in becoming a Catholic, I had very little to reject of what I had previously held. I have found, on reviewing my past life, hardly a single positive conviction I ever held that I do not still hold, hardly a denial I ever made that I would not still make, if divested of my Catholic faith. I fell short of Catholicity, but in no instance, where I faithfully followed reason, did I run counter to it. The change I underwent was in taking on, rather than in casting off; and my Catholic faith was, under the grace of God, the slow and gradual accumulation of twenty-five years of intense mental activity, and incessant struggle for light and a religion on which I could rely.

Belief on the authority of the church, supposing that authority adequately proved or provable to reason to be from God, and really his authority, is the most reasonable thing in the world. All belief, as distinguishable from science, is

mediate assent on authority or testimony; and to complain of the Catholic faith that it is assent on authority or testimony, is to complain that it is faith and not knowledge. No reasonable man will do that. The objection usually urged by non-Catholics is founded on a misapprehension of what Catholics really mean by believing on authority. Authority in the sense of law, in the sense that it simply obliges without convincing, cannot be a reasonable ground of belief. The state may enact a creed and command me to believe it, but I cannot, even if I would, believe it for that reason. There is no necessary or logical connection between the enactment, or the command of the state, and the truth of the creed enjoined; and therefore it is and can be no reason why I should believe it. The command does and can throw no light on the truth of the creed; does and can produce, or aid in producing, no interior conviction, without which there is and can be no belief. The authority of the church taken in this sense is, indeed, no reason for believing, that is, in so far as belief is an act of the understanding; for, in this sense, authority can merely move the will, and no man can believe by simply willing to believe.

In Christian faith, subjectively considered, there is an act of the will and an act of the understanding. In so far as faith is an act of the will, we yield it, because commanded to do so by our sovereign; and hence faith becomes an act of obedience, and is treated by theologians as a virtue. But in so far as it is simply a belief or an act of the understanding, or a purely intellectual act, it is not and cannot be yielded as an act of obedience to authority, be that authority what it may. In this respect, I was right when I refused to believe because commanded; and, in this respect, rationalists and all non-Catholics are right, when they object to believing on authority. Nothing is or can be authority for faith, whether human or divine, in so far as faith is an intellectual act, and distinguished from volition, or determination of the will, that does not, at the same time that it commands the will, enlighten and convince the understanding. Authority is authority for the understanding, therefore for that intellectual assent which is called belief, only in that it enlightens and convinces reason, or is itself a full and satisfactory reason for believing,—a real light to the understanding. Nothing is more reasonable than to believe God at his word, but we cannot believe even him by reason that his word is a command; we do so only by reason that his word

is the word of eternal, immutable, and absolute truth. It is overlooking this distinction, and taking authority in the sense that it commands, and not in the sense that it enlightens and convinces, that has excited the hostility to belief on authority we so frequently encounter.

All men, whatever their speculations, admit the authority of reason, and that what is really reasonable is really true and just. But reason is light and worthy of trust, only because God creates it, and is himself its immediate object and light. It is the participation of reason in the Divinity, by virtue of the communion of our reason with the divine reason as its object, that renders reason itself authoritative, makes it reason, or intellectual light, at all. We see and know things even in the natural order, only because God immediately affirms himself as the intelligible, and, by the light of his own being illuminating them, renders them visible or intelligible to us. The principle, or a parallel principle, holds in the church. Her authority, though in a higher order, is of a nature parallel with the authority of reason. Reason is created, constituted by the act of God communicating to it the light and truth of his own being in the natural order, and its authority is the authority of the divine light and truth communicated; the church is created, constituted by the act of God communicating to it the light and love of his own essence in the supernatural order, and its authority is the authority of his own essential light and love. The ground of the authority, and the principle of inward assent or conviction, is the same in both cases; and no reason can be assigned or conceived why intellectual submission to the teaching of the church should be less easy than submission to the dictates of reason; or why the one should be more or less derogatory from the rights and freedom of the mind than the other. The whole value of natural reason is derived from the presence of God in and to it, creating and illuminating it: this is the sole ground of its existence and authority. The sole value of the teaching of the church, the sole ground of her existence and authority, is in the supernatural presence of the incarnate God in her and to her, creating and illuminating her.

The commission to the church of which Catholics so often speak, is not merely an external commission, given externally to a person foreign to the divine person of our Lord. The church exists and lives by direct and immediate communion with the incarnate God; nay, is his body, and, as it were, the

outward, or visible, or sensible continuation or representation on earth of the Incarnation. Like our Lord himself, she is at once divine and human. She is the union of the two natures with the two natures of Christ in one divine person. Her authority thus derives, not from an external commission, which is only its external sign or symbol, but from the reality of this union, from God himself dwelling in her, from the Paraclete, or Spirit of Truth, who inhabits her, and operates in her, as in the natural order he inhabits natural reason, and operates in and through it. There is nothing formal or forensic in the case; all is internal, real, living, and the church is rendered through the indwelling Holy Ghost, in relation to the intellect, the supernatural light and reason of God, which is all the most hesitating human reason can demand for its illumination and assent to what she teaches.

An external commission may suffice for obedience to an external command. I obey the powers that be, when they do not require me to disobey God, although I have no belief in their infallibility, or in the intrinsic wisdom or expediency of their policy, because God commands me to do it; so I obey, in the government and administration of external ecclesiastical affairs, the officers of the church, although I do not believe them always wise or prudent, because they have been commissioned by him who has the sovereign right to command me, and I obey them for his sake. But when it comes to matters of belief, this external commission does not suffice. It must be internal as well as external, and carry with it the internal light and ability that connects the authority indissolubly with the truth of what it teaches; that is, the authority of the church, to serve the demands of the intellect, though expressed through human organs, must be really the authority of God himself, in his infinite light and truth. Neither popes nor councils in their mere humanity, in their own nature, wisdom, sagacity, or virtue as men, do or can suffice as authority for believing a single Catholic dogma. No pope, no member of a council, is in himself either infallible or impeccable; and no aggregation of fallibles can make an infallible. No elevation of a man to an official station of itself renders him infallible, or adds any thing to his wisdom or knowledge. The pope, if we look only to his external commission, as successor of St. Peter, would and could have only an official, only a reputed infallibility,—be infallible only in the sense of being the court of last resort, from which there lies no appeal,—

the only sense in which the illustrious Count de Maistre seems to have recognized either the pope or the church as infallible. The commission, if it communicates authority for reason, must communicate the ability which teaches the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. It is the Holy Ghost supernaturally assisting the pope, and preserving, permanently or for the time being, his judgment from error, that constitutes his definitions authoritative in matters of faith. The same is to be said of councils. The authority, strictly speaking, is not in them as their own virtue or right, but in the Holy Ghost who is present in them, and whose organs they are. The authority of the church in matters of faith, therefore, enlightens as well as commands, convinces as well as obliges, because it is intrinsically the light and authority of absolute truth; and consequently belief on her authority is no blind belief, no blind submission to mere will or power, but an enlightened and reasonable belief, as much so as is or can be any belief on competent and credible testimony.

Of course, the authority, which in this case means the inward infallibility of the church in teaching, must be established to the full satisfaction of reason, before we can reasonably believe any thing because she teaches it. But, this done, belief on her authority is not a mere submission to power, or a command, but a true surrender to the highest reason, and, therefore, a true, real, inward conviction, because her authority is intimately and necessarily connected with the truth of the things taught. That God can found such a church, and endow her with the inward authority, without violating the principles of the natural order, or in strict accordance with the principles and nature of natural reason, is shown by the doctrine of life by the communion of the object and subject, which I have already explained. Communion between God and man is possible, although only like communes with like, because man has in his own nature a likeness to God. Human reason is the likeness in man of the divine reason, and hence, nothing hinders intercommunion between the reason of God and the reason of man. Though divine reason, as the object, is independent of the human, and does not, as Leroux maintained, live by communion with it, yet the human reason lives only by communion with the divine, as, in all cases, the subject lives only by communion with the object, and not reciprocally, the object by communion with the subject. By this com-

munion, the subject partakes of the object, the human reason of the divine reason, which is infinite, absolute truth. The divine Being, in this communion established by himself, communicates the life of his own reason to the life of the subject, so that our reason lives in and by his reason. This is the origin and ground of the truth and authority of natural reason; and this natural reason, thus in communion with the divine, is the source and ground of the unity of the human race in the natural order, and the formative principle of natural society; that is, in so far as natural society is the society of men, and distinguishable from mere animal gregariousness.

God does not exhaust his light in natural reason, any more than he does his creative power in natural creation. In affirming himself in natural reason as the intelligible, our reason itself bears witness that there is in him, above what it apprehends, the infinite superintelligible; that there are infinite depths in his being not intuitively affirmed to reason. Hence, nothing hinders God, if he chooses, from creating, in correspondence with the natural,—as in his own being the superintelligible is in correspondence with the intelligible,—a superintelligible or a supernatural order, or from supernaturally elevating reason, and affirming himself to it as supernatural. In such case, there would be established between human reason and the divine reason a supernatural communion, whence would result, by the law of all communion, a supernaturalized life, constituting a new, supernaturalized or regenerated humanity; that is to say, the church, or society with a supernatural principle of unity and life, as distinguished from natural society. Suppose we become members of this supernatural society by the election of grace, as we become members of natural society by natural generation, and we have not an adequate conception of the church indeed, but, nevertheless, a conception of the church as a society above natural reason, and living by communion with the divine reason, in a sense higher than that in which the natural human race commune with it, and therefore in a sense in which it is authority for natural reason.

This removes all the antecedent improbability of Catholicity, all the *a priori* objections to an authoritative church, and renders the fact of such a church as probable as any other historical fact. Take, now, the well-known traditions of the race, in all ages and nations, the authentic historical

facts and monuments bearing on the question, together with the fact of the continued existence of such a society, under different forms, or in different states, from the first, and which can no more be disputed than the existence of natural society, its identity with the patriarchs, with the Jewish Synagogue, and, since the accomplishment of the Incarnation, previously foretold, promised, and expected, with the Roman Catholic Apostolic Church, becomes evident and undeniable; for, if any thing can be regarded as certain, it is that the church in communion with the see of Rome is the successor of the synagogue, the inheritor of the traditions of the race, the depositary of the revelations of God, and the living body of Christ on earth; the real regenerated human society. Come thus far, and thus far philosophy and history, faithfully studied and rightfully applied, do bring us, the rest is easy; for then we may take the church herself as authority for her own character and doctrine.

This is the process by which I found my way to the Catholic Church as the body of our Lord living his divine-human life, informed with his reason, having its personality in his divine person, and teaching with authority, because teaching with the light and truth of his divinity. Evidently, then, the authority of the church in relation to the understanding is the inherent light and truth she lives by virtue of her supernatural communion with the divine incarnate Reason or Word, who is one with God, nay, is God, as we are told in the proem of St. John's Gospel. In submitting to her, I yielded to the highest reason; and my submission was intelligent, not an act discarding reason, but an act of reason herself in the full possession and free exercise of her highest powers. No act of belief is, or can be more reasonable; and, in performing it, I kept faithfully the resolution I made on leaving Presbyterianism, that henceforth I would be true to my own reason, and maintain the rights and dignity of my own manhood. No man can accuse me of not having done it. I never performed a more reasonable, a more manly act, or one more in accordance with the rights and dignity of human nature, though not done save by divine grace moving and assisting thereto, than when I knelt to the Bishop of Boston, and asked him to hear my confession and reconcile me to the church, or when I read my abjuration, and publicly professed the Catholic faith; for the basis of all true nobility of soul is Christian humility, and nothing is more manly than submission to God, or

more reasonable than to believe God's word on his own authority.

To believe what the church teaches, because she teaches it, is in this, the Catholic view of the question, perfectly reasonable, because her teaching really is authority for reason, testimony to the understanding, as well as a command to the will. Authority for believing is always necessary, and nothing is more unreasonable than to believe without authority. Belief without authority is credulity, is folly, or madness; not an act of reason, but an act of unreason. The same is true as to the supernatural order, which, though above nature, is not contrary to it, but in its principles and laws in accordance with it. It is as reasonable to believe that on competent and credible testimony, as it is any fact of the natural order on the testimony of men or of monuments. The difficulty men feel on this subject is, that they conceive the supernatural as antinatural, and the authority of the church as simply power, giving an order or command addressed to the will, and communicating no light to the reason. This objection is valid against Calvinism and all the other forms of so-called Evangelical Protestantism, but does not avail against Catholicity; because both the assumptions on which it rests are, as to Catholicity, misapprehensions, since Catholicity presents the natural and supernatural in mutual accordance, as two distinct strings of the same harp, and authority as communicating light as well as issuing an order. I obey God's command because he is my sovereign, and has the right to command me; I believe him because he is truth, and can neither deceive nor be deceived. I believe his word, not because it is his word as my sovereign, but because it is his word as the infinite, eternal, and unalterable truth, absolute truth, the truth in itself; for God in relation to the intellect is the true, as in relation to the will he is the good. In relation to the will his word is imperative, in relation to the intellect it is light and truth, and produces inward conviction.

Taking this view of belief on the authority of the church as an intellectual act, and advising my Catholic friends that I am not now engaged in treating of faith as a theological virtue, there can be no ground for the feeling so commonly entertained by non-Catholics, that the teachings and definitions of the church must needs operate as restraints on mental freedom, and bring the Catholic into a degrading intellectual bondage. Certainly her teachings, her dogmas, her

definitions, do bind my will, inasmuch as they are authorized by my sovereign Lord and Proprietor, who has an absolute right to my obedience; but inasmuch as they are at the same time light to my reason, and put me in possession of the truth, they can restrain my intellectual freedom only in the sense that all truth possessed restrains it. They satisfy reason by providing it the communion, without which it cannot live. They place the mind in relation with its proper object, and thus save it from error and falsehood, which are its sickness and death. So far as this is to abridge our mental freedom, and reduce us to intellectual bondage, they undoubtedly do it, but no further. Reason can operate and live only by communion with the intelligible, and all error is unintelligible; and I cannot persuade myself that any thing which saves the reason, without violating her own laws, from sickening and dying, is to be deplored. Whoever makes himself acquainted with the definitions of the church, will find that they all tend to save reason, as well as faith itself. I have never encountered a condemned proposition that was not an error against reason, as well as a sin against faith. For a man who wishes to err, to run off into all manner of intellectual vagaries and extravagances, the church, certainly, is not his proper place, he will not be able to gratify his insane propensity in her communion; but he who would not woo darkness, who would not lose himself in doubt and perplexity, who would really open his eyes to the light, who would really exercise his reason according to her own laws, and live in communion with the truth, will find in her communion full freedom, and ample room to grow and expand to the full capacity of his nature without crowding or being crowded.

I have been, during the thirteen years of my Catholic life, constantly engaged in the study of the church and her doctrines, and especially in their relations to philosophy, or natural reason. I have had occasion to examine and defend Catholicity precisely under those points of view which are the most odious to my non-Catholic countrymen and to the Protestant mind generally; but I have never, in a single instance, found a single article, dogma, proposition, or definition of faith, which embarrassed me as a logician, or which I would, so far as my own reason was concerned, have changed, or modified, or in any respect altered from what I found it, even if I had been free to do so. I have never found my reason struggling against the teachings of the

church, or felt it restrained, or myself reduced to a state of mental slavery. I have, as a Catholic, felt and enjoyed a mental freedom, which I never conceived possible while I was a non-Catholic. This is my experience; and, though not worth much, yet in this matter, whereof I have personal knowledge, it is worth something.

CHAPTER XX.—CONCLUSION.

I have now completed the sketch I proposed to give of my intellectual struggles, failures, and successes, from my earliest childhood till my reception by the Bishop of Boston into the communion of the Catholic Church. I have not written to vindicate my ante-Catholic life, or to apologize for my conversion. I have aimed to record facts, principles and reasonings, trials and struggles, which have a value independent of the fact that they relate to my personal history. Yet even as the personal history of an earnest soul, working its way, under the grace of God, from darkness to light, from the lowest abyss of unbelief to a firm, unwavering, and not a blind faith in the old religion, so generally rejected and decried by my countrymen, I think my story not wholly worthless, or altogether uninstructive,—especially when taken in connection with the glimpses it incidentally affords of American thought and life during the greater portion of the earlier half of the present century. Whether what I have written proves me to have been intellectually weak, vacillating, constantly changing, all things by turns, and nothing long, or tolerably firm, consistent, and persevering in my search after truth; whether it shows that my seeking admission into the church for the reasons, and in the way and manner I did, was a sudden caprice, an act of folly, perhaps of despair, or that it was an act of deliberation, wise, judicious, and for a sufficient reason, my readers are free to judge for themselves.

This much only will I add, that, whether I am believed or not, I can say truly that, during the nearly thirteen years of Catholic experience, I have found not the slightest reason to regret the step I took. I have had much to try me, and enough to shake me, if shaken I could be, but I have not had even the slightest temptation to doubt, or the slightest inclination to undo what I had done; and have every day found new and stronger reasons to thank Almighty God for his great mercy in bringing me to the knowledge of his

church, and permitting me to enter and live in her communion. I know all that can be said in disparagement of Catholics. I am well versed, perhaps no man more so, in Catholic scandals, but I have not been deceived; I have found all that was promised me, all I looked for. I have found the church all that her ministers represented her, all my imagination painted her, and infinitely more than I had conceived it possible for her to be. My experience as a Catholic, so far as the church, her doctrines, her morals, her discipline, her influences are concerned, has been a continued succession of agreeable surprises.

I do not pretend that I have found the Catholic population perfect, or that I have found in them or in myself no shortcomings, nothing to be censured or regretted; yet I have found that population superior to what I expected, more intellectual, more cultivated, more moral, more active, living, and energetic. Undoubtedly, our Catholic population, made up in great part of the humbler classes of the Catholic populations of the Old World, for three hundred years subjected to the bigotry, intolerance, persecutions, and oppressions of Protestant or *quasi*-Protestant governments, have traits of character, habits, and manners, which the outside non-Catholic American finds unattractive, and even repulsive. Certainly in our cities and large towns may be found, I am sorry to say, a comparatively numerous population, nominally Catholic, who are no credit to their religion, to the land of their birth, or to that of their adoption. No Catholic will deny that the children of these are to a great extent shamefully neglected, and suffered to grow up without the simplest elementary moral and religious instruction, and to become recruits to our vicious population, our rowdies, and our criminals. This is certainly to be deplored, but can easily be explained without prejudice to the church, by adverting to the condition to which these individuals were reduced before coming here; to their disappointments and discouragements in a strange land; to their exposure to new and unlooked-for temptations; to the fact that they were by no means the best of Catholics even in their native countries; to their poverty, destitution, ignorance, insufficient culture, and a certain natural shiftlessness and recklessness, and to our great lack of schools, churches, and priests. The proportion, too, that these bear to our whole Catholic population is far less than is commonly supposed; and they are not so habitually depraved as they appear, for they seldom or never consult appearances, and have little

skill in concealing their vices. As low and degraded as they are, they never are so low or so vicious as the corresponding class of Protestants in Protestant nations. A Protestant vicious class is always worse than it appears, a Catholic vicious population is less bad. In the worst there is always some germ that with proper care may be nursed into life, that may blossom and bear fruit. In our narrow lanes, blind courts, damp cellars, and unventilated garrets, where our people swarm as bees; in the midst of filth and the most squalid wretchedness, the fumes of intemperance and the shouts and imprecations of blasphemy; in what by the outside world would be regarded as the very dens of vice, and crime, and infamy, we often find individuals who, it may well be presumed, have retained their baptismal innocence, real *Fleurs de Marie*, who remain pure and unsullied, and who, in their humble sphere, exhibit brilliant examples of the most heroic Christian virtues.

The majority of our Catholic population is made up of the unlettered peasantry, small mechanics, servant-girls, and common laborers, from various European countries; and however worthy in themselves, or useful to the country to which they have migrated, cannot, in a worldly and social point of view at least, be taken as a fair average of the Catholic population in their native lands. The Catholic nobility, gentry, easy classes, and the better specimens of the professional men, have not migrated with them. Two or three millions of the lower, less prosperous, and less cultivated, and sometimes less virtuous class of the European Catholic populations, have in a comparatively brief period been cast upon our shores, with little or no provision made for their intellectual, moral, or religious wants. Yet, if we look at this population as it is, and is every year becoming, we cannot but be struck with its marvellous energy and progress. The mental activity of Catholics, all things considered, is far more remarkable than that of our non-Catholic countrymen, and, in proportion to their numbers and means, they contribute far more than any other class of American citizens to the purposes of education, both common and liberal; for they receive little or nothing from the public treasury, and, in addition to supporting numerous schools of their own, they contribute their quota to the support of those of the state

I do not pretend that the Catholic population of this country are a highly literary people, or that they are in any

adequate sense an intellectually cultivated people. How could they be, when the great mass of them have had to earn their very means of subsistence, and have had as much as they could do to provide for the first wants of religion, and of themselves and families? Yet there is a respectable Catholic-American literature springing up among us, and Catholics have their representatives among the first scholars and scientific men in the land. In metaphysics, in moral and intellectual philosophy, they take already the lead; in natural history and the physical sciences, they are not far behind; and let once the barrier between them and the non-Catholic public be broken down, and they will soon take the first position in general and polite literature. As yet our own literary public, owing to the causes I have mentioned, I admit is not large enough to give adequate encouragement to authors, and the general public makes it a point not to recognize our literary labors. But this will not last, for it is against the interest and the genius of liberal scholarship, and Catholic authors will soon find a public adequate to their wants. Non-Catholics do themselves great wrong in acting on the principle, No good can come out of Nazareth; for we have already in what we ourselves write, in what we reprint from our brethren in the British Empire, and in what we translate from French, German, Spanish, and Italian Catholics, a literature far richer and more important, even under a literary and scientific point of view, than they suspect.

I have known long and well the Protestant clergy of the United States, and I am by no means disposed to underrate their native abilities or their learning and science, and, although I think the present generation of ministers falls far below its predecessor, I esteem highly the contributions they have made and are making to the literature and science of our common country; but our Catholic clergy, below in many respects what for various reasons they should be, can compare more than favorably with them, except those among them whose mother tongue was foreign from ours, in the correct and classical use of the English language. They surpass them as a body in logical training, in theological science, and in the accuracy, and not unfrequently in the variety and extent of their erudition. Indeed, I have found among Catholics a higher tone of thought, morals, manners, and society, than I have ever found, with fair opportunities, among my non-Catholic countrymen; and taking the Cath-

olic population of the country, even as it actually is, under all its disadvantages, there is nothing in it that need make the most cultivated and refined man of letters or of society blush to avow himself a Catholic.

Certainly, I have found cause to complain of Catholics at home and abroad, not indeed as falling below non-Catholic populations, but as falling below their own Catholic standard. I find among them, not indeed as universal, far from it, but as too prevalent, habits of thought and modes of action, a lack of manly courage, energy, and directness, which seem to me as unwise as they are offensive to the better class of English and American minds. In matters not of faith, there is less unanimity and less liberality, less courtesy and less forbearance, in regard to allowable differences of opinion, than might be expected. But I have recollected that I am not myself infallible, and may complain where I should not. Many things may seem to me wrong, only because I am not accustomed to them. Something must be set down to peculiarity of national temperament and development; and even what cannot be justified or excused on either ground, can in all cases be traced to causes unconnected with religion. The habits and peculiarities which I find it most difficult to like, are evidently due to the fact that the Catholics of this country have migrated for the most part from foreign Catholic populations, that have either been oppressed by non-Catholic governments directing their policy to crush and extinguish Catholicity, or by political despotisms which sprang up in Europe after the disastrous Protestant revolt in the sixteenth century, and which recognized in the common people no rights, and allowed them no equality with the ruling class. Under the despotic governments of some Catholic countries, and the bigotry and intolerance of Protestant states, they could hardly fail to acquire habits not in accordance with the habits of those who have never been persecuted, and have never been forced, in order to live, to study to evade tyrannical laws or the caprices of despotism. Men who are subjected to tyranny, who have to deal with tyrants, and who feel that power is against them, and that they can never carry their points by main force, naturally study diplomacy, and supply by art what they lack in strength. This art may degenerate into craft. That it occasionally does so with individuals here and elsewhere, it were useless to deny; but the cause is not in the church or any thing she teaches or approves. In fact, many things which Englishmen and

Americans complain of in Catholics and the populations of southern Europe, have been inherited from the craft and refinement of the old Græco-Roman civilization, and transmitted from generation to generation in spite of the church.

As yet our Catholic population, whether foreign-born or native-born, hardly dare feel themselves freemen in this land of freedom. They have so long been an oppressed people, that their freedom here seems hardly real. They have never become reconciled to the old Puritan Commonwealth of England, and they retain with their Catholicity too many reminiscences of the passions and polities of the Bourbons and the Stuarts. They are very generally attached to the republican institutions of the country, no class of our citizens more so, and would defend them at the sacrifice of their lives, but their interior life has not as yet been moulded into entire harmony with them; and they have a tendency, in seeking to follow out American democracy, to run into extreme radicalism, or, when seeking to preserve law and order, to run into extreme conservatism. They do not always hit the exact medium. But this need not surprise us, for no one can hit that medium unless his interior life and habits have been formed to it. Non-Catholic foreigners are less able than Catholic foreigners to do it, if we except the English, who have been trained under a system in many respects analogous to our own; and no small portion of our own countrymen, "to the manner born," make even more fatal mistakes than are made by any portion of our Catholic population,—chiefly, however, because they adopt a European instead of an American interpretation of our political and social order. Other things being equal, Catholic foreigners far more readily adjust themselves to our institutions than any other class of foreigners; and among Catholics, it must be observed that they succeed best who best understand and best practise their religion. They who are least truly American, and yield most to the demagogues, are those who have very little of Catholicity except the accident of being born of Catholic parents, who had them baptized in infancy. These are they who bring reproach on the whole body.

Undoubtedly there is in Catholic, as well as in non-Catholic states, much that no wise man, no good man, can defend, or fail to deplore. I have not travelled abroad, but I have listened to those who have, and I claim to know a little of the languages and literatures of southern Europe. From the best information I can get, I do not believe that

things are so bad in Spain, Portugal, and Italy, as Protestant travellers tell us; nor that the political and social condition of the people in those states is so beautiful or so happy as now and then a Catholic, who imagines that he must eulogize whatever he finds in a Catholic state, or done by men who call themselves Catholic, in his pious fervor pretends. Yet, be the political and social condition of the people in these countries as bad as it may be, it does not disturb my Catholic faith, or damp my Catholic ardor. All the modern Catholic states of Europe grew up under Catholicity, and were more Catholic than they are now at the period of their greatest prosperity and power. The decline which is alleged, and which I have no disposition to deny, in the Italian and Spanish Peninsulas, is fairly traceable to political, economical, commercial, and other causes, independent in their operation of Catholicity, or of religion of any sort. Moreover, as a Catholic, I am under no obligation to defend the policy or the administration of so-called Catholic governments, not even the policy and administration of the temporal government of the Papal States. The pope as supreme doctor and judge of the deposit of faith, in teaching and defining the faith of the church, I hold is, by the supernatural assistance of the Holy Ghost promised to his office, infallible, and I accept his definitions, *ex animo*, the moment they reach me in an authentic shape; but I am aware of no law of the church, of no principle of Catholicity, that requires me to believe him infallible in matters of simple administration, which our Lord has left to human prudence. In these matters, so far as they are directly or indirectly ecclesiastical, I obey him as the supreme governor of the church, as I obey the constitution and laws of my country, not because it is impossible for him to err, but because he is my divinely appointed ruler. Much less am I bound to believe in the infallibility or impeccability of nominally Catholic sovereigns and states. I am as free to criticise, to blame the acts of the Catholic as of the non-Catholic governments, and as free to dispute the political doctrines of Catholics, whether monarchical, aristocratical, or democratical, as the political doctrines of non-Catholics. The church prescribes and proscribes no particular form of government; she simply asserts that power, in whose hands soever lodged, or however constituted, is a trust, and to be administered for the common good on pain of forfeiture.

As a matter of fact, no doubt much of what is objection

able or deplorable in Catholic Europe is due to the character of the governments which have existed and governed the Catholic populations since the epoch of the Protestant revolt; and the chief obstacle to the revival and progress of Catholic civilization in Catholic states, as well as the recovery to the church of the mass of European liberals, now bitterly hostile to Catholicity, there is just as little doubt, is to be found in the habits and manners generated by political and civil despotism. Catholicity leaves to every people its own nationality, and to every state its independence; and it ameliorates the political and social order only by infusing into the hearts of the people and their rulers the principles of justice and love, and a sense of accountability to God. The action of the church in political and social matters is indirect, not direct, and in strict accordance with the free-will of individuals and the autonomy of states. Individuals may hold very erroneous notions on government, and sustain their rulers in a very unwise and disastrous policy, without necessarily impeaching their Catholic faith or piety. To be a good Catholic and save his soul, it is not necessary that a man should be a wise and profound statesman.

The Protestant movement, directed chiefly against the papacy, and involving as it did a hundred years of so-called religious wars, gave the princes who took the side of the church an opportunity, of which they were not slow to avail themselves, to extend and consolidate their power over their Catholic subjects, and to establish in their dominions monarchical absolutism, or what I choose to call modern Cæsarism. They extended, under plea of serving religion, their power over matters which had hitherto either been left free or subjected only to the jurisdiction of the spiritual authority. They were defenders of the faith against armed heretics, and to restrict their power, they pretended, would be to embarrass them in their defence of the church. A habit of depending on them as the external defenders of religion and her altars, the freedom of conscience, and Catholic civilization itself, was generated; the king took the place in the thoughts and affections of the people due to the sovereign pontiff, and by giving the direction to the schools and universities in all things not absolutely of faith, they gradually became the lords of men's minds as well as bodies. In France, Spain, Portugal, and a large part of Italy, all through the seventeenth century, the youth were trained in the maxim, The prince is the state, and his pleasure is law.

Bossuet, in his politics, did only faithfully express the political sentiments and convictions of his age, shared by the great body of Catholics as well as of non-Catholics. Rational liberty had few defenders, and they were exiled, like Fénelon, from the court. The politics of Philip II. of Spain, of Richelieu, Mazarin, and Louis XIV. in France, which were the politics of Catholic Europe, hardly opposed except by the popes, through the greater part of the sixteenth and the whole of the seventeenth century, tended directly to enslave the people, and to restrict the freedom and efficiency of the church. Had either Philip, or after him Louis, succeeded, by linking the Catholic cause to his personal ambition, in realizing his dream of universal monarchy, Europe would most likely have been plunged into a political and social condition as unenviable as that into which old Asia has been plunged for these four hundred years; and it may well be believed that it was Providence that raised and directed the tempest that scattered the Grand Armada, and that gave victory to the arms of Eugene and Marlborough.

Trained under despotic influences, by the skilful hand of despotism, extending to all matters not absolutely of the sanctuary, and sometimes daring with sacrilegious foot to invade the sanctuary itself, the people were gradually formed, interiorly as well as exteriorly, to the purposes of the despot. They grew up with the habits and beliefs which Cæsarism, when not resisted, is sure to generate. The clergy sympathizing, as is the case with every national clergy, with the sentiments of their age and nation in all not strictly of faith, had little disposition to labor to keep alive the spirit of freedom in the heart of the people, and would not have been permitted to do it, even if they had been so disposed. Schools were sustained, but, affected by the prevailing despotism, education declined, free thought was prohibited, and it is hard to find a literature tamer, less original, and living than that of Catholic Europe all through the eighteenth century, down almost to our own times.

As the Catholic religion was professedly patronized by the sovereigns, the church, in superficial minds, seemed to sanction the prevailing Cæsarism. The clergy, because they preached peace, and sought to fulfil their mission without disturbing the state, came, for the first time in history, to be regarded as the chief supporters of the despot. They who retained some reminiscences of the liberties once enjoyed by Catholic Europe, and the noble principles of freedom

asserted in the middle ages by the monks in their cells, and the most eminent doctors of the church from their chairs, became alienated from Catholicity, in proportion as they cherished the spirit of resistance, and unhappily imbibed the fatal conviction that, to overthrow the absolute throne, they must break down the altar. Rightly interpreted, the old French Revolution, although bitterly anti-Catholic and infidel, was not so much hatred of religion and impatience of her salutary restraints, as the indignant uprising of a misgoverned people against a civil despotism that affected injuriously all orders, ranks, and conditions of society. The sovereigns had taken good care that an attack on them should involve an attack on religion, and to have it deeply impressed on their subjects that resistance to them was rebellion against God. The priest who should have labored publicly to correct the issue made up by the sovereigns in accord with unbelievers, would have promoted sedition, and done more harm than good; besides, he would have been at once reduced to silence, in some one of the many ways despotism has usually at its command.

The horrors of the French Revolution; the universal breaking up of society it involved; the persecution of the church and of her clergy and her religious it shamelessly introduced in the name of liberty; the ruthless war it waged upon religion, virtue, all that wise and good men hold sacred, not unnaturally, to say the least, tended to create in the minds of the clergy and the people who remained firm in their faith, and justly regarded religion as the first want of man and society, a deeper distrust of the practicability of liberty, and a deeper horror of all movements attempted in its name. This, again, as naturally tended to alienate the party clamoring for political and social reform still more from Catholicity; which in its turn has reacted with new force on the Catholic party, and made them still more determined in their anti-liberal convictions and efforts. These tendencies on both sides have been aggravated by the recent European revolutions and repressions, till now, almost everywhere, the lines are well defined, and the so-called liberals are, almost to a man, bitterly anti-Catholic, and the sovereigns seem to have succeeded in forcing the issue: The church and Cæsarism, or liberty and infidelity.

Certainly, as religion is of the highest necessity to man and society, infinitely more important than political freedom and social well-being, I am unable to conceive how the Cath-

olic party, under the circumstances, could well have acted differently. Their error was in their want of vigilance and sagacity in the beginning, in suffering the political Cæsarism to revive and consolidate itself in the state, or the sovereigns in the outset to force upon the Catholic world so false an issue, or to place them in so unnatural and so embarrassing a position. How they will extricate themselves in the Old World from that position, I am unable to foresee, for every movement on either side only makes the matter worse. Yet the internal peace and tranquillity of Catholic states cannot be restored, and the liberals brought back to the church in any human way that I can see, unless the Catholic party abate something of their opposition, exert themselves to change the issue the sovereigns have forced upon them, and take themselves the lead in introducing, in a legal and orderly way, such changes in the present political order as will give the body of the nation an effective voice in the management of public affairs. Rebellions, when they break out, must of course be put down; but, at the same time, every effort should be made to disconnect religion from the cause of despotism, and to remove every legitimate source of discontent. All attempts to remedy the existing evil by decrying liberty, by sneers or elaborate essays against parliamentary governments and their advocates, by permanently strengthening the hands of power, by muzzling the press, abridging the freedom of thought and speech, or by resorting to a merely repressive policy, which silences without convincing, and irritates without healing, are short-sighted and unstatesmanlike. They can at best be only momentary palliatives which leave the disease, uneradicated, to spread in the system, and to break out anew with increased virulence and force. The truth is, the Catholic party, yielding to the sovereigns, lost to some extent, for the eighteenth century, the control of the mind of the age, and failed to lead its intelligence. They must now recover their rightful leadership, and be first and foremost in every department of human thought and activity; and to be so, they must yield in matters not of faith, not essential to sound doctrine, or to the free and full operation of the church in all her native rights, integrity, and force; but, in political and social matters subjected to human prudence, they must, I say, yield something to the changes and demands of the times.

That the struggles in Europe have an influence on Cath-

olic thought in this country is very true, and sometimes an unfavorable influence, cannot be denied. A portion of our foreign-born Catholics, subjected at home to the restraints imposed by despotism, feel on coming here that they are loosed from all restraints, and forgetting the obedience they owe to their pastors, to the prelates whom the Holy Ghost has placed over them, become insubordinate, and live more as Protestants than as Catholics; another portion, deeply alarmed at the revolutionary spirit and the evils that it has produced in the Old World, distrust the independence and personal dignity the American always preserves in the presence of authority, and are half disposed to look upon every American as a rebel at heart, if not an unbeliever. They do not precisely understand the American disposition that bows to the law, but never to persons, and is always careful to distinguish between the man and the office; and they are disposed to look upon it as incompatible with the true principle of obedience demanded by the Gospel. But I think these and their conservative brethren in Europe mistake the real American character. There is not in Christendom a more loyal or a more law-abiding people than the genuine people of the United States. I think European Catholics of the conservative party have an unfounded suspicion of our loyalty, for I think it a higher and truer loyalty than that which they seem to inculcate. I have wholly mistaken the spirit of the church, if an enlightened obedience, an obedience that knows wherefore it obeys, and is yielded from principle, from conviction, from free will, and from a sense of obligation, is not more grateful to her maternal heart than the blind, unreasoning, and cringing submission of those who are strangers to freedom. Servile fear does not rank very high with Catholic theologians; and the church seeks to govern men as freemen, as Almighty God governs them, that is, in accordance with the nature with which he has created them, as beings endowed with reason and free-will. God adapts his government to our rational and voluntary faculties, and governs us without violence to either, and by really satisfying both. The church does the same, and resorts to coercive measures only to repress disorders in the public body. Hence our ecclesiastical rulers are called shepherds, not lords, and shepherds of their Master's flock, not of their own, and are to feed, tend, protect the flock, and take care of its increase for him, with sole reference to his will, and his honor and glory. We

must love and reverence them for his sake, for the great trust he has confided to them, not for their own sakes, as if they owned the flock, and governed it in their own name and right, for their own pleasure and profit. This idea of power whether in church or state, as a delegated power or trust, is inseparable from the American mind; and hence the American feels always in its presence his native equality as a man, and asserts, even in the most perfect and entire submission, his own personal independence and dignity, knowing that he bows only to the law or to the will of a common Master. His submission he yields, because he knows that it is due, but without servility or pusillanimity.

But though I entertain these views of what have been for a long time the policy of so-called Catholic governments, and, so to speak, the politics of European Catholics, I find in them nothing that reflects on the truth or efficiency of the church; for she has no responsibility in the matter, since, as I have said, she governs men, discharges her mission with a scrupulous regard to the free-will of individuals and the autonomy of states. She proffers to all every assistance necessary for the attainment of the most heroic sanctity, but she forces no man to accept that assistance. In her view, men owe all they have and are to God, but they are neither slaves nor machines.

In speaking of Catholic nations and comparing them with the Catholic standard, I find, I confess, much to regret, to deplore, and even to blame; but in comparing them with non-Catholic nations, the case is quite different, and I cannot concede that the Catholic population of any country is inferior to any Protestant population, even in those very qualities in respect to which Catholics are usually supposed to be the most deficient. In no Catholic population will you find the flunkyism which Carlyle so unmercifully ridicules in the middling classes of Great Britain; or that respect to mere wealth, that worship of the money-bag, or that base servility to the mob or to public opinion, so common and so ruinous to public and private virtue in the United States. I do not claim any very high merit for our Catholic press; it lacks, with some exceptions, dignity, grasp of thought, and breadth of view, and seems intended for an unlettered community; but it has an earnestness, a sincerity, a freedom, an independence, which will be looked for in vain in our non-Catholic press, whether religious or secular. The Catholic population of this country, too, taken

as a body, have a personal freedom, an independence, a self-respect, a conscientiousness, a love of truth, and a devotion to principle, not to be found in any other class of American citizens. Their moral tone, as well as their moral standard, is higher, and they act more uniformly under a sense of deep responsibility to God and to their country. Owing to various circumstances as well as national peculiarities, a certain number of them fall easily under the influence of demagogues; but as a body, they are far less demagogical, and far less under the influence of demagogues, than are non-Catholic Americans. He who knows both classes equally well, will not pretend to the contrary. The Catholics of this country, by no means a fair average of the Catholic populations of old Catholic countries, do, as to the great majority, act from honest principle, from sincere and earnest conviction, and are prepared to die sooner than in any grave matters swerve from what they regard as truth and justice. They have the principle and the firmness to stand by what they believe true and just, in good report and evil report, whether the world be with them or against them. They can, also, be convinced by arguments addressed to their reason, and moved by appeals to conscience, to the fear of God, and the love of justice. The non-Catholic has no conception of the treasure the Union possesses in these two or three millions of Catholics, humble in their outward circumstances as the majority of them are. I have never shown any disposition to palliate or disguise their faults; but, knowing them and my non-Catholic countrymen as I do, I am willing to risk the assertion that, with all their faults and shortcomings, they are the salt of the American community, and the really conservative element in the American population.

I have found valid after thirteen years of experience none of those objections to entering the Catholic communion which I enumerated in a previous chapter, and which made me for a time hesitate to follow the convictions of my own understanding. To err is human, and I do not pretend that I have found Catholics in matters of human prudence, in what belongs to them and not to the church, all that I could wish. I have found much I do not like, much I do not believe reasonable or prudent; but it is all easily explained without any reflection on the truth or efficiency of the church, or the general wisdom and prudence of her prelates and clergy. Undoubtedly our Catholic population,

made up in great part of emigrants from every nation of Europe, with every variety of national temper, character, taste, habit, and usage, not yet moulded, save in religion, into one homogeneous body, may present features more or less repulsive to the American wedded to his own peculiar nationality and but recently converted to the Catholic faith; but the very readiness with which these heterogeneous elements amalgamate, and the rapidity with which the Catholic body assumes a common character, falls into the current of American life, and takes, in all not adverse to religion, the tone and features of the country, proves the force of Catholicity, and its vast importance in forming a true and noble national character, and in generating and sustaining a true, generous, and lofty patriotism. In a few years they will be the Americans of the Americans, and on them will rest the performance of the glorious work of sustaining American civilization, and realizing the hopes of the founders of our great and growing republic.

Such are the views, feelings, convictions, and hopes of the Convert. But he would be unjust to himself and to his religion, if he did not say that, not for these reasons, or any like them, is he a Catholic. He loves his country, loves her institutions, he loves her freedom, but he is a Catholic because he believes the Catholic Church the church of God, because he believes her the medium through which God dispenses his grace to man, and through which alone we can hope for heaven. He is a Catholic, because he would believe, love, possess, and obey the truth; because he would know and do God's will; because he would escape hell and gain heaven. Considerations drawn from this world are of minor importance, for man's home is not here, his bliss is not here, his reward is not here, he is made for God, for endless beatitude with him, hereafter; and, let him turn as he will, his supreme good, as well as duty, lies in seeking "the kingdom of God and his justice." That the church serves the cause of patriotism; that, if embraced, it is sure to give us a high-toned and chivalric national character; that it enlists conscience in the support of our free institutions and the preservation of our republican freedom as the established order of the country, is a good reason why the American people should not oppose her, and why they should wish her growth and prosperity in our country; but the real reason why we should become Catholics and remain such, is, because she is the new creation, regenerated human-

ity, and without communion with her, we can never see God as he is, or become united to him as our supreme good in the supernatural order.

THE PRINCETON REVIEW AND THE CONVERT.*

[From Brownson's Quarterly Review for April, 1858.]

Our readers are aware that the editor of this *Review* published a book last November, entitled *The Convert, or Leaves from my Experience*, in which he gives an account of his religious and mental experience from early childhood to his reception into the Catholic Church, in October, 1844. This book is not an autobiography, for it gives scarcely any particulars of the author's exterior life; nor is it, properly speaking, a polemical or controversial work. It simply narrates the principal events of the author's intellectual career, and gives, always in a narrative form, the reasons why he joined this sect or school, and why he abandoned it for another, and finally those which destroyed his confidence in the whole Protestant system, or no-system, and induced him to submit to the Church of Rome. It is not for us to pronounce any opinion on its merits, or the importance of its facts and opinions, or on the value of its reasons; but we may say, that the book is an honest book, and is written with kindly feelings towards the author's former friends, as far as we can discover, without any wrath or bitterness on the part of its author.

As the author gives with his accustomed freedom reasons for joining and renouncing different sects and schools, his work could not, of course, be very complimentary to those he has renounced, and could hardly fail to offend some grave pretensions, and wound some deeply cherished prejudices. Our venerable contemporary, *The Princeton Review*, the able and learned organ of the old school Presbyterians, appears to have been seriously *exercised* by the account the author gives of his Presbyterian experience, and

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* *Brownson's Exposition of himself.* The Biblical Repertory and Princeton Review. Philadelphia. January, 1858.

its issue for January last contains an elaborate review of *The Convert*, evidently designed to do all that an old school Presbyterian organ can be expected to do to neutralize its damaging effects on Presbyterianism. The reviewer evidently regards the book as likely to do harm to his sect in particular, and feels himself called upon to guard the Presbyterian young ministers and students against its papistical influence. We have read his article with some curiosity and with due attention. It is clever, adroit, and probably is as good as the case admitted. It is not very courteous, very sweet tempered, or very fair, but we suppose it harmonizes with the manners and taste of an old school Presbyterian, who has inherited the spirit of Calvin, Beza, and Knox, if not their learning, their theological science, and philosophical and logical ability.

It is difficult to reduce the reviewer's article to a systematic form, or to bring its various loose and rambling statements to a logical test. The reviewer writes with a singular contempt of the categories as well as the rules for the composition of a discourse, essay, or dissertation. It is difficult to get what he says into a state in which it admits of a formal reply. It lacks unity, has no central or mother principle, and is for the most part made up of loose, disjointed, and contradictory sentences. But we must take what the gods give us, and do the best we can with their gifts.

A great part of the article is apparently devoted to the very agreeable task of disparaging, as far as possible, the character, and invalidating the testimony of the author of *The Convert*, and the rest is devoted to an attempt to refute the charges he brings against Presbyterianism, and his reasoning in favor of Catholicity. The personal part is the least important part, and will not detain us long. Neither the author nor his friends have any thing to fear for his personal character, or any call to enter upon its defence. He himself has said in *The Convert* all that is to be said in his disparagement, and all that needs to be said in his vindication. Yet we cannot pass over this part of the article in absolute silence, for there are a great many people in this world who cannot understand the expressiveness of silence. We let the reviewer speak for himself:

"Mr. Brownson has long been noted for attempting bold and reckless feats as a writer upon literature, philosophy, politics, and theology. This audacity, combined with a considerable power of expressing himself in classic, nervous English, has given him a place among our American

notabilities. On his own showing, he has, by turns, been the adherent, expositor, and defender of Universalism, Infidelity, Atheism, Materialism, the Communism of Robert Dale Owen and Fanny Wright, St. Simon and *St. Hilaire*, the Eclecticism and Pantheism of Cousin, together with the social, political, and ecclesiastical theories which thence emerge. After this tortuous course, becoming 'every thing by turns, and nothing long,' he very rationally concluded that the best use men can make of their intellects is to submit them to infallible and authoritative guidance. From historical and philosophical considerations, he reasoned himself into the belief that the Roman Pontiff alone possesses those prerogatives of infallibility and authority, which are sufficient to keep him out of those vagaries into which and out of which his unaided reason had so long been worming its way,

> to find no end,
> In wandering mazes lost."

This is rather clever, though a little too flippant. But who is this *St. Hilaire?* The author mentions no such founder of a system which he followed. Surely he confesses to having followed systems enough to render it unnecessary to invent new ones for him, and charge him with following a system he never heard of. He accepted and defended the eclecticism of Cousin, but never his pantheism, as all who are acquainted with his writings can bear ample testimony. That his course was "tortuous" may or may not be true, but if it was, the fault must be charged to the Protestantism in which he was born and bred. Protestantism does not furnish a man true principles; it gives him a false point of departure, and he must make many a turning and winding, before he can east himself, and get his face set in the right direction. "He concluded that the best use men can make of their intellects is to submit to infallible and authoritative guidance." Not a bad conclusion we should say. Does the reviewer think differently? He professes himself, as we shall see, to have infallible and authoritative guidance. Does he hold himself free to resist it? or degraded in yielding to it?

"He appears to have forgotten that the Scriptures are the ultimate, the only infallible guide, sufficient to make 'the man of God perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.' Despairing of any adequate light from these, he does not seem ever to have 'searched them, whether these things be so.' So far as we can see, although he strenuously insists to the contrary, he had recourse to the Roman Pontiff in a mere 'fit of intellectual despair.' His argument was simply this: The consequence of trusting mere human reason is endless vacillation and scepticism.

The consequence of relying on the Bible, without the Pope, is the sects and divisions of Protestantism. The only alternative, therefore, for those who crave unity and stability, is implicit submission to the Pope. Extremes meet. The rankest Rationalism and Infidelity are on the margin of abject submission to the most stolid and domineering hierarchs—just as in the civil state, the anarchy of mobs is the immediate precursor of absolute despotism. He judged well, that in matters divine we need a divine guide. He showed his wonted facility of educing great conclusions from slender premises, when he judged the Pope of Rome to be such a guide, rather than the sure word and very oracles of God himself."

We cannot understand how Dr. Brownson could forget, what he never knew, that "the Scriptures are the ultimate, the only infallible guide." He shows very clearly in his book that of themselves alone they are not such a guide, and the reviewer himself does not hold them to be. They are even for the reviewer such a guide (p. 139) only when interpreted to him by "the Spirit of God." All Protestantism that pretends to rise above bald rationalism, or dry formalism, resorts to enthusiasm or illuminism, and seeks its guide not in the Scriptures alone, but in the alleged interior light and operations of the Holy Ghost. The reasoning the reviewer ascribes in this extract to the author may be very conclusive, but it is not the process by which he came to the church. The author says and shows that he did not come to the church by an act of intellectual despair, and the abnegation of reason. He became a Presbyterian in that way, the only way, we apprehend, in which any man ever deliberately becomes a Presbyterian; but he came to the Catholic Church in and by the exercise of his reason, aided by the grace of God. The reviewer forgets that he has just said in the preceding paragraph, that "from historical and philosophical considerations he (the author) *reasoned* himself into the belief that the Roman Pontiff alone possesses the prerogative of infallibility and authority."

"The rankest rationalism and infidelity are on the margin of abject submission to the most stolid and domineering hierarchs." There is truth in that, as the author himself proved by his abject submission, in early life, to the Presbyterian Church. "He judged well, that in matters divine we need a divine guide." And not finding that divine guide in Presbyterianism, he renounced it, and ceased henceforth to respect it. "He showed his wonted facility of educing great conclusions from slender premises, when he

judged the Pope of Rome to be such a guide, rather than the sure word and the very oracles of God." Nay, he showed this facility far more strikingly, when from the professions of Presbyterians he concluded the Presbyterian Church to be the church of God. We must add, with the reviewer's leave, that the author did not judge "the Pope of Rome to be such a guide, *rather than* the sure word and the very oracles of God." It was precisely because he judged that the pope or the church gives "the sure word and the very oracles of God," that he became a Catholic, and submitted to the authority and teaching of the pope, as the visible head of the church, and vicar of Christ.

"It requires no slight courage in one man to set himself up as the expounder and champion of the multitudinous and contradictory systems which our author has successively espoused and repudiated. But it requires still greater courage to attempt, as he has done in this volume, to vindicate his moral integrity and intellectual consistency in such a course. It is somewhat of an exploit to appear as the advocate of nearly every type of opinion, except evangelical truth—to career through the whole compass of fatuous error, from the credulity of Atheism to the credulity of Superstition. But it is a still more prodigious exploit for such a man to undertake to expound and justify himself."—P. 118.

With a single reserve we agree in this with the reviewer, and so, we presume, does the author of *The Convert*. As we understand the matter, one reason which induced him to write his book was to show, as a warning to others, the rashness and audacity of which he had been guilty. But it is a gross mistake to suppose that the author wrote to vindicate himself, or to justify his various aberrations, except in relation to Protestants. Before Catholicity, before the church, before God, he can only smite his breast and exclaim, *mea culpa, mea culpa, mea maxima culpa!* but before Protestantism, which gives us only false principles, a false starting-point, and no guidance but our own feeble understanding, or an illusory illuminism, in studying either the book of nature, or the book of revelation, he has no confession to make. On Protestant principles, or in view of the position in which Protestantism places one born and bred in its bosom, he maintains that his course, tortuous as it may have been, is perfectly justifiable. Catholics may censure him, but not Protestants; for only on the supposition of the truth of Catholicity did he do wrong, or fall into any serious error. No doubt, he sinned against common sense, but so

sins Protestantism itself, especially old school Presbyterianism. The pot must not call the kettle black. No man is allowed to stand on his own wrong. Dr. Brownson had as much right to dissent from the Presbyterian Church as Luther had to dissent from the Catholic Church, and as good a right to concoct a doctrine, or erect a church for himself, as the reformers had for themselves. Once erect rebellion into a principle, and all rebellion is justifiable. Rebels must cease to be rebels, before they have the right to arraign any one for his want of loyalty or obedience.

After all, the attempt of the reviewer to disparage the intellectual or moral character of the author, on the ground that, after leaving Presbyterianism, and before becoming a Catholic, he embraced various forms of error, and was associated with various socialistic, communistic, or other unchristian movements, can serve the purpose of our reviewer only momentarily. In his view, old school Presbyterianism is the best and only true form of Protestantism, and he cannot count it a matter of much consequence, what form of Protestantism a man embraces after renouncing that. The only alternatives he leaves are, to be a Presbyterian, a liberal Christian, or a Catholic; for he cannot expect a man who has known Presbyterianism, especially old school Presbyterianism, to take up afterwards with Oxford or Mercersburg, Andover or New Haven, with Methodism, or with the Baptist sect. When, then, our author renounced Presbyterianism, nothing remained for him but to be a liberal Christian of some sort, that is an unbeliever, or to become a Catholic. Why blame him, then, for taking the only alternatives left him? Does the reviewer think it strange that a man who could not be a Presbyterian should become an unbeliever, or that, becoming an unbeliever, he should run into all the errors and absurdities confessed by the author of *The Convert?* Does the reviewer think that, having become a liberal Christian, or an unbeliever, the author did wrong in not remaining one? Of course, not; he even applauds his renunciation of all the systems and doctrines he held between his rejection of Presbyterianism and his conversion to Catholicity. Only two things, then, are really open to the animadversion of the reviewer, namely, the solidity and sufficiency of the reasons the author assigns on the one hand for rejecting Presbyterianism, and on the other, for embracing Catholicity. These reasons, whether good or bad, are independent of the personal merit or demerit, the errors or

changes of the author of *The Convert*, and speak for themselves. The reviewer can do or say nothing to his purpose, except what tends to refute them. To prove that the author often acted hastily, rashly, is nothing to the purpose, for he confesses and deplores that he did so, especially when he joined the Presbyterian Church. The fact that he did so, does not weaken the reasons he assigns either for renouncing Presbyterianism, or for accepting Catholicity. He does not assign the fact of his conversion as a reason why others should be converted; he relies on the reasons which availed to convince him, and which are intrinsically as strong in the case of others as in his. It is, then, mere trifling, or at best an attempt to draw off the attention of the public from the real question at issue, to dwell on the author's personal character, or to parade against him the errors and absurdities which he confesses, but which even the reviewer concedes he renounced on becoming a Catholic, and no longer holds. The only pertinent question is: Do the reasons the author assigns justify him in renouncing Presbyterianism and embracing the Catholic religion? This is the proper and only proper question for the reviewer. The reviewer is half aware of this, and makes a feeble attempt to prove the insufficiency of those reasons. He first tries to throw doubts on the account the author gives of his Presbyterian experience. He does not, indeed, venture to deny positively any statement made in *The Convert*, but insinuates that what he says can be true only on the supposition that the author fell in with fanatics, new school men, or Congregationalists, whom he mistook for genuine Presbyterians. But there is no evidence that the Presbyterians with whom he met in Ballston, New York, were more fanatical than Presbyterians usually are; the division of the old and new school Presbyterians had not then taken place; and the author, brought up in New England, was not likely to confound Presbyterians with Congregationalists. The pastor of the church he joined studied his theology at Princeton, we believe, the reviewer's own seminary, and belonged to a presbytery in full communion with the Presbyterian General Assembly of the United States, to which, if our memory serves us aright, he was a delegate in 1821. It will not do, then, to say, that the Presbyterians *The Convert* describes were not genuine Presbyterians.

After citing at length the author's account of his reception into the Presbyterian Church, the reviewer adds:

"There are things of a different sort in this account of his Presbyterian experience, which furnish internal evidence that he was drawing more upon his imagination than his memory. Who believes that any Presbyterian session would admit a person to the communion on the bare statement, that he had lost confidence in the sufficiency of reason, and therefore wanted an infallible guide? This is the sum of what Mr. Brownson assures us he announced to the pastor and session of the Ballston church. It is hardly to be believed that any Presbyterian session opened the door of communion to any one who did not, with apparent intelligence and sincerity profess faith in and obedience to the Lord Jesus Christ, of which Mr. Brownson soon gave deplorable evidence, whatever his professions, that he was destitute.

"He further tells us that his pastor agreed with him that the Article in the Confession, on fore-ordination, was harsh; and informed him that he had moved in the General Assembly to have it modified, in which he failed by only two or three votes. The possibility of any such vote in the General Assembly in favor of any material modification of that article in any stage of its history, seems to us extremely questionable. The New-school innovators in their palmiest days never attempted this, however any of them may have promulged speculative dogmas subversive of it."—P. 134.

The facts are as stated in *The Convert;* whether the author's conversion was genuine or not, we do not presume to decide. The Presbyterian judges decided that it was, and joyously opened to him the communion of their church. The reviewer, must, as they were Presbyterians, presume they were good Christians, and therefore, according to his doctrine, under the infallible guidance of the Holy Ghost. It will not do for him, then, to question their decision. They decided the author had received grace, and as on Presbyterian principles grace is inamissible, the reviewer must suppose he continued in grace during all his subsequent aberrations, and so continues even now, and consequently is sure of salvation. With regard to the vote on the article in the confession touching fore-ordination, the author merely states what his pastor, an old school Presbyterian, we believe, told him. If the information was incorrect, the fault lies not with him, but with his informant. He never pretended to state it as a fact within his own personal knowledge. The reviewer knows better than we what degree of credit is due to the statements of a Presbyterian minister.

Having disposed of these matters as well as the nature of the case admitted, the reviewer approaches closer to the real questions in issue:

"Mr. Brownson's main object, however, is to make out that Presbyterianism imposes a worse bondage than Romanism, not only in relation to life and manners, but in regard to reason and faith. He claims that it has all the disadvantages without any of the advantages of the Romish system. It does not claim infallibility, or that its tenets should be believed merely upon its own authority. It asserts the infallibility of God speaking in his word: and that the evidence for all articles of faith is found in that word: that they are to be believed upon God's authority, manifested in his word, and not on the authority of any uninspired church, prelate, or pontiff: therefore, that true faith receives them not because they are found in the Confession, but because, though stated in the Confession and proved therein from the word of God, they are first affirmed in the Scriptures. Therefore we receive them not upon the testimony of man, but of God, not as the word of man, but as the word of God. And without assuming to be infallible, we have that confidence that these are the doctrines of God, that we are ready to stake our eternity upon them; and to take the responsibility of refusing to admit to communion, or call by the Christian name, those who deny the most essential of them. In regard to these—all which have immediately to do with our enjoyment of the favor of God—we have the sure word of prophecy; sure not only in itself, but in our apprehension and belief of it. The promise is sure to all the seed. We know in whom we have believed, and that he is able to keep that which we commit unto him. We know the things that are freely given us of God. We know and are persuaded that nothing shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. We know too that he that believeth not this gospel shall be damned; that if any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, he is anathema maranatha; that without holiness no man shall see the Lord. We know that whosoever confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, is not of God: that if any man be in Christ Jesus, he is a new creature: and that if any man have not the spirit of Christ, he is none of his. We know this and much more, even all the integral elements of our religion, not because the Pope says so, but because, thus saith the Lord in his word. Yet, while we know this, we are not inspired messengers of new truth not revealed in God's written word. We know it through eyes cleared of the film of sinful prejudice and blindness, and beholding it set forth in the sure testimonies of God. Nor do we assume to be infallible expositors of every part of the word of God, relative to minor and less essential matters. Much less do we assume the divine prerogative of lording it over men's faith, or of being invested with authority to command or enforce belief of any doctrines, by any pains and penalties beyond disowning as Christians those who disown the essential truths, or renounce the practice which constitutes Christianity. We call no man master, and are no man's masters. But we do claim to know and set forth what God himself has declared essential to salvation, not to believe and obey which ensures perdition. As the

word of God has a radiance of divinity and in-evidence of inspiration, which binds all to whom it comes, to believe it on pain of eternal damnation, so we hesitate not to proclaim its cardinal requirements, as requirements of God, indubitably declared in his word, and necessary to be believed in order to salvation. Yet we teach that these things are to be believed, not upon our authority, or because we say them, but upon the authority of God, and because he says them ; and therefore that the believer must ground his faith, not upon any human creed or articles of man's composing, but upon the word of God; consequently, that he must look to the Bible as his ultimate creed, which gives to any human creed, or teaching, whatever authority it possesses; in short, he must found his faith not on any mere human word, but on God's word, and search the Scriptures whether these things be so, that his faith may stand not in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God. How then is occasion given for Mr. Brownson's great objection to the Protestant system? Does it not offer infallible authority for the faith it propounds, even the undisputed word of God, which the Roman Church concedes is such, and boasts of having kept entire and intact ? And if it calls upon men to behold in this word the testimony of God to the truth it propounds, instead of taking it upon any mere human testimony, is this any hardship? If we grant the infallibility of the Pope, is it any easier to examine his rescripts, bulls, and mandates, than the declarations of God as recorded by the holy prophets, evangelists, and apostles ? Must we employ our reason in judging of the meaning of the Scriptures ? And must it not also be employed in judging of the meaning of a Papal dogma ? Must we abide in one case what our reason discerns to be set forth, and not in the other ? Or does the Pope address his decrees to us as irrational beings ? What but sheer nonsense or ignorance then is it, for Mr. Brownson to talk, as he over and over again does, of abnegating his own reason in becoming a Presbyterian, while he acted with the highest rationality in becoming a Romanist ? In the former case he was called to employ his reason directly in discerning the mind of God as declared in his word. In the latter, he resigned that function of reason to the Pope, but still was under the necessity of using it in discerning the import of his pronunciamentos. In the one case he yields his reason to what Protestants and Romanists alike concede to be the word of God; in the other, to a person whose inspiration all Protestants deny, and the tokens of which are to those of the inspiration of the Bible, less than the brightness of the glow-worm to that of the sun."—Pp. 134–137.

This long extract is a fair specimen of the reviewer's doctrine and logic. It fully sustains the charges preferred in *The Convert* against Presbyterianism. The reviewer concedes that the author judged well, that in divine matters we need a divine guide. The author tells us that he joined the Presbyterians, because he hoped to find such a guide in

their church. He renounced that church after a brief trial, he tells us again, because he found that it neither did, would, nor could perform the office of such a guide. It disclaimed all authority to teach, remitted the individual to the Bible; bade him take that, study it carefully, and understand for himself, and then it excommunicated him, if he did not happen to understand it in accordance with its standards. He found its spirit harsh, arrogant, and tyrannical, &c. Here are sufficient reasons, if true, for rejecting the Presbyterian Church. Are they true? In the extract we have made, the more important of them are virtually conceded, nay, confirmed and defended.

"The Presbyterian Church," says the reviewer, "does not claim infallibility, or that its tenets are to be believed upon its own authority." If it does not claim infallibility, it is by its own concession fallible, and, therefore, may teach for the word of God what is not his word. Then, it has no teaching authority, for in matters of faith a fallible authority is no authority at all. The reviewer concedes that in matters divine, and such are matters of faith, we need a divine guide. Whatever is divine is infallible. No divine guide can err, or lead into error. The Presbyterian Church, since it is fallible, cannot be divine, and therefore, can have no authority, can be no guide in matters of faith. For it, then, to attempt to exercise authority in such matters is an attempt at usurpation, to sustitute the human for the divine, and to bring us into bondage to men instead of ushering us into the glorious liberty of the sons of God. But it does not "claim that its tenets are to be believed on its own authority." Does this mean that it has and claims no authority in the case? Then it has nothing to do with faith, and is no divine guide, and has not a word to say in the matter. Or, does it mean that its authority is not the ultimate reason or ground of faith; that is, that it has no authority to make articles of faith, or to propose any thing to be believed as of faith, not revealed by God himself? If this is the meaning, the reviewer only says of his church what we say, and must say of ours. Catholic faith, objectively considered, is *Deus revelans et ecclesia proponens.* The church has authority to propose, can propose, and does propose as of faith only what is contained in the revealed word of God, transmitted from the apostles to us. The Catholic claims for his church authority not to make the faith, but to propose and define the faith originally revealed,

for what is not a *revelatum* cannot be of Catholic faith; and we believe what she proposes and defines, not because she proposes and defines it, but because God has revealed it. The point is not whether you disclaim all right or pretension on the part of the Presbyterian Church to propose tenets to be held on its own authority, but whether you claim for it authority to determine what God himself has revealed, to be believed not precisely on its own authority, but on the authority of God. Do you disclaim for it this authority? If you do, then you must hold yourselves perfectly free to follow your own judgment in determining what is or is not the word of God. If you are thus free, for it to come in and excommunicate you for not determining according to its standards, as you know it does, would be outrageous tyranny—the very tyranny charged by our author against you. Your liberty would be a mere mockery, nay, a temptation and a snare. If, on the other hand, you claim for it authority in determining what it is God has revealed, we ask whether, in so determining, it is fallible or infallible? If the latter, you agree with us in principle, and claim for the old school Presbyterian Church what we claim for the holy Roman Catholic Apostolic Church, and the question between us is simply a question of fact, not of law. But this you cannot say, for you concede, and your church concedes, that as a church it is fallible, and does not claim infallibility. You must say, then, that in determining what it is that God reveals, your church is fallible, and may propose as revelation what is not revelation. If this be so, pray tell us, if it allows its members to reject what it proposes and defines to be of faith, and to do so uncensured? If so, what have you to say against Andover, New Haven, Mercersburg, Oxford, or even Cambridge? But you know it is not so, for it tries and excommunicates for heresy those who reject the Presbyterian standards. If it is fallible in proposing and defining the faith, and yet acts and judges as if it were infallible, the author, it seems to us, was right in his charges, and had a sufficient reason for renouncing the Presbyterian communion; for to be subjected in matters of faith to a fallible, is to be subjected to a mere human authority, which is intolerable bondage, gross mental and religious thraldom, which no true man will willingly submit to.

"It—the Presbyterian Church—asserts the infallibility of God speaking." Indeed! Does any body deny that God speaking is infallible? "And that the evidence for all arti-

cles of faith is to be found in that word"—that is, we suppose in God speaking—*Deus revelans*. But what is the evidence that this or that article alleged to be in the word of God, or to be God speaking, really is so? Here is a link wanting in the Presbyterian chain of evidence. "That they are to be believed on God's authority." Undoubtedly, if at all, for nothing but his authority is sufficient warranty for faith. "And not on the authority of any uninspired church, prelate, or pontiff." Certainly not. Every Catholic holds that, and it is one great reason why Catholics cannot accept Protestantism. "Therefore, he receives them not on the testimony of man, but of God, not as the word of man, but as the word of God." Very good; only you forget to supply the lacking link. How do you know that the articles of faith contained in your *Confession of Faith* are contained in the Scriptures, or in the revealed word of God, whether written or unwritten? Faith in the last analysis is belief on the veracity of God alone, or the belief that God is true, *Deus est verax*. But in order to believe an article because God has revealed it, you must know that he has revealed it. If you do not know that, in believing it you do not necessarily believe him. Here is the grand difficulty with your Presbyterianism. It tells us truly that God speaking is infallible, and to believe any thing on his authority, or because he says or reveals it, is perfectly reasonable. It adds the truism, that when we believe what he reveals because he reveals it, we believe on his, not on human testimony, his word, not man's word. But the difficulty is, that it has no authority to tell us what is or is not his word, what God has or has not revealed. We believe the *revelatum*, where we know that it is a *revelatum*, on the veracity of God; but how do we come to the knowledge of the fact that this or that is a *revelatum?* It is precisely here that the divine guide is needed, and it is precisely here that Presbyterianism leaves us without such a guide, to our own private judgments, or to a usurped, fallible human authority.

"And without assuming to be infallible we have that confidence that these are the doctrines of God, that we are ready to stake our eternity on them." That you have such confidence we do not dispute, but that is not the question. But if neither you nor your church is infallible, how can you be certain that your confidence is not a blind, a foolish confidence, and that you are not running a fearful risk of losing the eternity you are so ready to stake. "We have the sure

word of prophecy—sure not only in itself, but in our apprehension and belief of it." How do you know that? Your church is confessedly fallible, and may err in determining what are or are not the doctrines of God; and as you confess you do not assume to be infallible yourselves, how do you know that your assurance is not a mere subjective assurance, an illusion, nay, a strong delusion, which God permits, or, as your version says, "sends," as a punishment for your pride and rejection of his church. "The promise is sure to all the seed." But how know you that you are "the seed?" Holy David tells us, no man knoweth whether he deserveth love or hatred. But be all this as it may, it does not meet the case. Whatever assurance you have, and whatever its value, it is an individual affair, rests on the internal state of the individual, and is not and cannot be given by the Presbyterian Church. It does not rest on its authority as teacher, or its capacity as a guide in matters of faith. It has nothing to do with it, yet without being able to declare that the doctrines are the doctrines of God on its own knowledge, or any knowledge it can use, it cuts off from its communion all who deny what it holds to be those doctrines. "And without assuming to be infallible, we have that confidence that these are the doctrines of God, that we are ready to stake our eternity upon them; *and to take the responsibility of refusing to admit to our communion, or call by the Christian name, those who deny the most essential of them.*" What is this but a full confirmation of the charge brought in *The Convert* against the Presbyterian Church.

"Nor do we assume to be infallible expositors of the word of God, relative to minor and less essential matters." Aha! then you do claim to be infallible expositors of the word of God relative to larger and more essential matters? Just now you disclaimed infallibility. Now it would seem that, up to a certain extent at least, you claim it. "Much less do we assume the divine prerogative of lording it over men's faith, or of being invested with authority to command or enforce belief of any doctrines by any pains and penalties *beyond disowning as Christians those who disown the essential truths, or renounce the practice which constitutes Christianity.*" How long is it since Presbyterians went further, and inflicted other pains and penalties than those here named? But let that pass. The passage proves the truth of the charge, that the Presbyterian Church, while it refuses to assume the responsibility of authoritatively teaching the

individual, excommunicates him, if in his honest researches he comes to conclusions hostile to her standard of doctrine. "We call no man master, and are no man's masters." That, Mr. Reviewer, is equivocal, and sins by that figure of logic called in the schools, *ignorantia elenchi*. The question does not turn on what you, as individuals, claim or disclaim, but on what your church claims and does. The authority is human, since you concede it to be fallible, and yet she does claim authority over men's faith, and the right to inflict on them the heaviest penalty known to the ecclesiastical law, that of excommunication, for not believing or for denying what she holds to be the essential truths of Christianity. It may be you are no man's masters, but if you have not as Presbyterians a *human* master, you give us a very false account of your church. "But we do claim to know and set forth what God himself has declared to be essential to salvation, not to believe and obey which ensures perdition." Here you claim all that the Catholic Church claims, or ever has claimed in the case. "Yet we teach that these things are to be believed, not upon our authority, or because we say them, but upon the authority of God, because he says them." All very fine, but not *ad rem*. Upon what authority is one to believe that God says them? "He must look to the Bible as his ultimate creed, which gives to any human creed whatever authority it possesses; in short, he must found his faith not on any mere human word, but on God's Word." All that we understand very well; but upon what authority is one to take the fact that God says these things? "He must search the Scriptures whether these things be so, that his faith may stand not in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God." That is, the Presbyterian Church sends the inquirer to the Scriptures to learn what are the doctrines God reveals, and excommunicates him, if he comes to a conclusion contrary to her standards. "How then," the reviewer naïvely asks, "is occasion given for Mr. Brownson's great objection to the Protestant system?" Why, bless your soul, Mr. Reviewer, you have done nothing but confirm that very objection. "Does it not offer infallible authority for the faith it propounds?" Nay, that is not the question. Does it offer infallible authority that what it propounds is revealed by Almighty God, or is contained in his word? It does not, you are forced to concede that it does not, and yet you admit that it consigns to eternal perdition all who do not believe

what it, on no authority at all, declares are the doctrines of God. The simple truth is, no form of Protestantism can consistently assert any church authority in matters of faith; for to do so would be to condemn Protestantism in its very principle. The Protestant reformation originated in rebellion against church authority, and that rebellion can in no-wise be defended, unless freedom of the individual in face of the church be asserted. To deny that freedom is to deny Protestantism itself. This has been proved over and over again by so-called liberal Christians. But to assert it, opens the door to all manner of errors, to absolute heresies of doctrine, and places Theodore Parker on the same Protestant platform with Dr. Alexander, or Dr. Hodge. Protestants are condemned, if they would retain any fragments of revealed truth, to a perpetual self-contradiction, and to pull down with one hand what they build up with the other. It is a necessity of their position. They must stammer in their speech, and speak with a double tongue. They cannot afford to be consistent, to be logical, to be faithful to their own principles; for, were they so, they would either run into pure rationalism, or return to the Catholic Church. This is the lesson of Dr. Brownson's *Convert*. He aimed to be logical, and following the principle which Protestantism must assert in order to justify the reformers in breaking away from the Catholic Church, he found himself running into rationalism, pure unbelief; recoiling from unbelief, from rationalism, and seizing and following the principles which Protestantism must recognize and maintain in order to have some semblance of religion, he was led by an invincible logic back to the Catholic Church. His variations, and manifold changes, were simply the effects of his struggles to escape either alternative. There is no use in talking. Protestantism is not all of one piece, but is a patchwork of unbelief and Catholic tradition. If it assumes to be a church, and to speak with authority in matters of faith or discipline, it condemns the reformers, and abandons its own essential principle as Protestantism; if it accepts the principle of individual freedom in the face of the church, and disclaims all authority in matters of faith, then it can take cognizance of no question of faith,—require assent to no creed or confession, as a condition of salvation. It cannot, in such cases, say a single word, as a church, on doctrines, or even on religious practice, without usurping an authority not its, and exercising in principle the grossest tyranny.

The old school Presbyterian is a respectable old gentleman, with many good qualities as a man, but he is necessarily placed by the nature of his Protestantism in a most sad dilemma. He has a lively horror of infidelity and the innovating spirit of modern times. He wishes to be conservative, to stand by the old landmarks, and to retain the essential faith of Christendom, for which we honor him ; but he is obliged to stop short in his conservative tendencies, for his sect came fifteen hundred years too late to be the church of Christ, and owes its existence to that very spirit of dissent and innovation he wishes now to resist.

The reviewer having disposed of the grave objection, brought in *The Convert* against Presbyterianism, that is, disposed of it by confirming it, he attempts to show that a similar objection may be urged against the Catholic system. The grave objection Dr. Brownson brought to Presbyterianism, was that it disclaimed all infallibility, refused to tell him authoritatively what he must believe, sent him to the Bible to form, by his own honest study of its pages, his own creed, or to ascertain the doctrines God has revealed, and then pronounced him a heretic, and consigned him to perdition, if in the exercise of his judgment he happened to come to conclusions repugnant to her standards ; thus both disclaiming and assuming authority, leaving him with all the responsibilities and disadvantages of private judgment, without allowing him any of the advantages of freedom. You are free, it said to him, to form your own creed from the Bible, and God forbid that I should dictate to you, or undertake to tell you what you must believe, but if you form a creed different from mine, or fail to believe as I believe, I will cut you off from my communion, deny you the Christian name, and consign you to eternal perdition. This charge we have seen, the reviewer really confirms, even while affecting to be very indignant at the author of *The Convert* for having brought it. Now he would fain persuade us that this charge may be retorted upon the Catholic Church. True, the Presbyterian, he concedes, must exercise his reason in determining the meaning of the Bible, but so must the Catholic in ascertaining the meaning of the rescripts, bulls, and mandates of the pope, and the former is as easy as the latter.

Unhappily our reviewer does not appear to have made any very profound study of the questions at issue between the Catholic Church and the several Protestant sects.

Throughout his whole article, he proceeds on the assumption, that we Catholics hold that the church, or the pope as visible head of the church, has authority to make articles of faith, whether they are contained in the revealed word of God or not. He assumes that we hold the pope is sovereign arbiter of our faith, and can declare any thing to be an article or dogma of faith he chooses, and therefore that our faith rests solely on human authority, and not on the word of God. This, we must tell him, is not only a mistake, but a mistake which is not creditable to his theological science. He should know, then, that while we concede that the church, and therefore the pope, since he possesses in himself all the powers of the church in their plenitude, has power to define and establish new articles of faith, we deny that either has authority to define, decree, or declare to be of faith any thing not contained in the divine tradition transmitted from the apostles to us, not contained in the original deposit of faith, or in the word of God committed to the apostles, and by them transmitted to their successors. The pope does not make the faith, any more than the judge makes the law; he only declares it, and can make or declare to be of Catholic faith, only what is contained in the original deposit, only what has been really of faith from the beginning. He has, therefore, no arbitrary power in the case, and the church in her decrees of new dogmas and articles, is restricted to the original deposit of faith. The authority of the church is in no case the ultimate reason or ground of our Catholic faith. In Catholic faith we believe the matters revealed, not because the church says they are true, but because they are the word of God, and God cannot lie, deceive, or be deceived. Thus in our act of faith, the Catholic says, "O, my God, I firmly believe all the sacred truths the holy Catholic Church believes and teaches, because thou hast revealed them, who canst neither deceive nor be deceived."

But though we believe not the *revelata* on the authority of the church, yet we do believe on her authority that they are *revelata*, or the word of God. We do not, as the reviewer imagines, believe the church or the pope is inspired to reveal truth, or authorized to make any thing not divinely revealed, of Catholic faith: we simply believe that the church, or, if you prefer, the pope, in whom the church culminates, is divinely appointed and assisted to keep, to promulgate, to define, and to declare what has already been

revealed and made obligatory on all the faithful, by our Lord himself. If the reviewer had known this, he would have seen that his flings at Catholics on the supposition that they reject the word of God for the pope, are quite out of character, and pointless, save us against himself. We hold as well as he that nothing can be of faith, but what is contained in the word of God. The point to be determined is not, whether we shall believe the word of God or not, for everybody who believes in God at all, knows and believes that his word is infallible truth. The point is to determine, by infallible authority, what is the word of God. Here is where the divergence between us and the reviewer begins. His church being confessedly fallible, cannot tell him what is the word of God, and therefore leaves him, on this question, as he himself confesses, to his own private reason. We, on the other hand, say that our church is a divinely appointed and assisted, and therefore an infallible guide in this very question, and able to solve it infallibly. The only difficulty in the case lies here. Once infallibly certain that a given doctrine is a divine *revelatum*, or divinely revealed, we believe it at once, by the simple force of reason itself; but if on this point we are not certain, are in doubt, we cannot believe the doctrine, because we are not sure that it is a revealed doctrine. The fault we find with the reviewer is, that precisely here, where the infallible guidance is necessary, and where alone it is necessary, his system fails us, provides us no authority or guidance at all, but leaves us to grope our way in the dark as best we can. On the Catholic system this difficulty is removed, by the infallible authority of the church, rendered competent by the assistance of the Holy Ghost to declare what God has or has not revealed. If the Catholic system be true, it meets and obviates the precise difficulty in the case.

Not at all, contends the reviewer, for it is as easy to ascertain by our reason the meaning of the Scriptures, as it is the meaning of papal rescripts, bulls, and mandates. "If we grant the infallibility of the pope, is it any easier to examine his rescripts, bulls, and mandates, than it is to examine the declarations of God, as recorded by holy prophets, evangelists, and apostles? Must we employ our reason in judging of the meaning of the Scriptures? And must it not also be employed in judging of the meaning of the papal dogma? Must we abide in the one case by what our reason discerns to be set forth, and not in the other?" This rea-

soning concedes that the Presbyterian must rely on his private reason to ascertain the meaning of the Scriptures, which it will be well to remember, especially when we find, as we soon shall, that he claims the aid of the Holy Ghost in doing it. The reviewer, however, proceeds on an assumption that we cannot grant him, namely, that all he has to do by his reason is to ascertain the meaning of the Scriptures. The point to be determined is, what is the word of God, or what has God revealed and commanded us to believe? The word of God is his word, whether written or unwritten, and whether written or unwritten, it is equally the proper object of Catholic faith. The rule of faith is always and everywhere the same. Men believed, and were true believers, before one syllable of the revealed word was written. The whole New Testament, as is evident on its face, was written after the church was founded, and was addressed to believers, for their instruction or edification. There must have been, then, in the beginning, and therefore there must be now, some means, independently of the Scriptures, of attaining to an infallible knowledge of the word of God, or of what it is God has revealed. None but those who can read can, on the reviewer's doctrine, know what God has revealed; and this, at one stroke, would exclude nineteen-twentieths of the human race from the possibility of being Christian believers, for not more than one-twentieth of the race know how to read. When the reviewer has ascertained the meaning of Scripture, his work is far from being done: he has still to settle the question that the writings he calls the Holy Scriptures, have been given by divine inspiration, and do really contain a record of "the declarations of God," a thing he can never do by his reason alone. The canon of Scripture cannot be settled by reason alone, for natural reason is not able of itself alone to judge whether an ancient writing be divinely inspired. He can settle it only by an appeal to the tradition of the church, and even by that appeal only on condition that he recognizes the infallible authority of that tradition. That he cannot do, for that tradition condemns his Presbyterianism. He had to deny the authority of that tradition, before he could assert his Presbyterianism, and having denied its authority, he cannot now appeal to it. If it is authority on one point, it is authority on all points covered by it. This is the answer to his *semper ubique*, which he so rashly interjects. It is evident, then, that the reviewer has to settle by reason alone, or interior illumina-

tion, the whole question of what is or is not revelation, or the matter to be believed on the authority of God speaking, —*Dei revelantis*. There is, then, in the outset, a very grave work for reason, on the reviewer's system, that there is not on ours. On the supposition of the infallibility of the church, all this work is done, all these questions are answered by her teaching, and all that we have to do in relation to this matter is simply to listen to what she teaches. Now, will the reviewer pretend that it is as easy for him to do all there is on his system for him to do, as it is for us to do what we have to do, that is, to understand the meaning of what the church with her own living voice tells us?

The reviewer seems to imagine that we can arrive at the meaning of what the church teaches only by reading and examining the papal rescripts, bulls, and mandates. This is a mistake; papal rescripts, bulls, and mandates, are not ordinarily addressed to the body of the faithful; they are addressed to individuals, or the prelates of the church, or if to the body of the faithful, only indirectly, through their pastors, and it is not necessary that the faithful as a body should examine or even see them. Then the reviewer forgets that on the Catholic system there is an *ecclesia judicans*, as well as an *ecclesia docens*, and therefore that when any doubt arises, or any misconception as to the meaning of what the church teaches, there is present a living authority ready to resolve the doubt, and to remove the misconception, which on the Presbyterian system is wholly wanting. But let the reviewer speak again for himself:

"This matter of Papal infallibility is almost the only issue between Protestants and Romanists discussed in the book. And this is hardly so much discussed, as disposed of by flings at the Protestant doctrine, chief among which are the passages already quoted, in which he makes all the monstrous heresies of his life a logical sequence from it. He would plainly have his readers understand, that these are justifiable, so far as the Protestant denial of Papal infallibility is justifiable. Fanny Wright libertinism is a clear logical sequence, he assures us, from the right of private judgment! Now in regard to all this, the first question is, what is the private judgment asserted by Protestants? It is simply this: 1. Each one must judge for himself that the Bible is the word of God, not of man, upon the evidence it offers to him of being such, not merely upon the testimony of some other man. 2. He must also judge for himself that it teaches certain truths, and enjoins certain duties, not merely because some other man says so, but because he perceives that God utters these things in his own oracles. He may be much assisted by

ministers and others, in bringing to his attention the evidences of the inspiration of the Bible, and of its asserting what it does assert rather than its contradictory. But still faith in the Bible as the word of God, and in Christian truth as taught in that word, is nothing else than a *judgment* or belief of the mind, that these things are so, upon the evidence presented, just as belief that the sun is luminous, or a stone is extended, is a judgment of the mind that these things are so, upon the evidence presented.

"Now on the supposition that the Pope is inspired, must there not be private judgment to an equal extent? Must there not be a personal judgment upon evidence that he is inspired, and also upon the doctrines he teaches, in view of the evidence thereof? This cannot be gainsaid." —p. 137.

Here it is concluded that on the Protestant system, "each one must judge for himself that the Bible is the word of God, not of man, upon the evidence it offers of being such, not merely upon the testimony of some other man." But if you allow each one to judge for himself, you must allow him to judge for himself whether the Bible is or is not the word of God, otherwise you prejudge the case and in no sense permit him to judge for himself. If, then, he judges the evidence it presents is insufficient to prove that it is the word of God, he is free to reject it as such word. Here your rule of private judgment justifies "the monstrous heresies" you speak of. Each one, you say, "must also judge for himself that it—the Bible—teaches certain truths, and enjoins certain duties, not merely because some other man says so, but because he perceives that God utters these things in his own oracles." But suppose he has already judged that the Bible is not the word of God, and suppose that he fails to perceive that the certain truths and the certain duties you insist on are contained in it? When you bid a man judge for himself, remit him to his private judgment, you necessarily, unless you are mocking him, leave him to decide the case either way according as he judges proper. We know Presbyterians have singular notions of freedom. Thus they teach with regard to free will, that a man is free in sinning although he has no power to will not to sin, and concurs freely with grace even when he has no power to resist it. Also they teach that a man is free to judge for himself, that they leave him perfectly free to judge for himself, whether the Bible be the word of God, and if it be, what it teaches, but consign him to eternal perdition, if he judges differently from them. But these notions are repugnant to

common sense, which denies freedom when either alternative presented is not equally free. The freedom to judge in accordance with a judgment already rendered, without the freedom to judge differently, is simply no freedom of judgment at all. If the reviewer means what he really says, he must concede that in submitting the two questions he specifies to private judgment, he holds to a rule which justifies all the heresies Dr. Brownson fell into while a Protestant.

But this is not the precise point before us. "Faith in the Bible as the word of God and in Christian truth as taught in that word is nothing else than a *judgment* . . . . that these things are so, upon the evidence presented." A *judgment*, undoubtedly, but are they a *private* judgment, or does the belief of the mind that they are so, rest on private judgment? The reviewer must be aware that a judgment is private or catholic, not simply because it is a judgment, or the judgment of an individual mind, but in that its rule or principle is private or catholic. Where the rule, principle, or evidence is private, restricted by the nature of the case to the mind judging, the judgment is a private judgment; but when it is a general principle of reason, common to all men, a public or catholic reason, the judgment is not a private, but, as we say, a catholic judgment. Though in receiving or in believing what the church teaches there is a decided act of reason, a real judgment of the mind, yet it is not a *private* judgment, because its rule or principle is public or catholic.

This distinction, which is very real, answers the objection the reviewer insinuates. On the Protestant system the questions, is the Bible the word of God, and what are the truths God has revealed, are remitted to *private* judgment, and the answers the Presbyterian gives to them are simply his private judgments, because he obtains them by no common, public, or catholic standard. The judgment the Catholic forms on the same questions is not *private* judgment, because its principle is not private but catholic, and there is a public tribunal before which it can be verified, corrected, if erroneous, and confirmed, if just. The supposition that the pope is inspired, and all the other suppositions dependent upon it, may be dismissed at once, for that the pope or the church is inspired is no Catholic doctrine. The points of investigation are few and easy on the Catholic system in comparison with what they are on the Protestant. The church is a liv-

ing, visible, and present body, and no more to be mistaken than the sun in the heavens. Extending as a living body, one and indivisible, from the apostles to us, she connects us by her faith and communion with them, so that in her we, as it were, shake hands with them, hear their voice, and commune with them face to face, and heart to heart. There is, then, no room to doubt that her faith is theirs, and that it is their teaching we hear in hers. Of course, there is a judgment of the mind that she is the apostolic church, but that is a judgment as easily formed, and as little of a private judgment properly so called, as the judgment that England is England, France is France, or the United States are the United States. The pope holds his authority *ex officio*, not as a private man, and in order to be assured of his authority to teach, we have only to be assured that he is pope, that he is Bishop of Rome. Undoubtedly there must be a judgment of the mind that he is Bishop of Rome; but that is as easily formed as the judgment that Victoria is Queen of Great Britain, Napoleon III. is Emperor of the French, or James Buchanan President of the United States. Undoubtedly, there must be a judgment that the church teaches this or that doctrine, but the church by her pastors and doctors is everywhere present to state to the mind whether she does or does not teach it, and in language express to the point, clear, simple, and without any ambiguity. If the pastor errs, there lies the appeal to the pope, who responds to the precise question raised, and in terms which cannot be misinterpreted. Thus is it with the Catholic, and there is obviously no foundation for the objection the reviewer would insinuate. When one has embraced the Catholic system, and is in the Catholic communion, all his difficulties as to what God has revealed are over; but when one is in the Presbyterian communion they remain in all their force, and on no point does the Presbyterian Church abridge his labor, or remove a single one of his doubts or difficulties. He settles and can settle every question of faith without her as well as with her, even supposing her belief correct, but no man can say the same of the Catholic Church. With her your first difficulty is your only difficulty, that of identifying her externally with that church of the apostles which our Lord said he would found on Peter, and against which the gates of hell should not prevail.

The reviewer, in order to prove that it is as difficult to ascertain the meaning of the papal definitions and decisions

as that of the Holy Scriptures, contends there are sects and parties in the church, such as Jansenists and Jesuits, cismontanes and ultramontanes, &c., and even goes so far as to say, "it is doubtful, if at this moment the diversities among the evangelical bodies, as to what they insist upon are the fundamentals of Christian doctrine and practice, . . . as taught in the Bible, are greater than they are among Romanists [Catholics] as to what, on the same points, is taught by the pope. It is certain that the old Jansenist and Jesuit controversy embraces the most material of these, to say nothing more." p. 138. The argument would be worth something, if the facts in the case were as the reviewer supposes. But they are not so. The differences among Catholics, whatever they may be, are never differences on points which the pope has formally defined, or as to the meaning of his definitions, but are differences on points on which he has not spoken. The differences between the so-called Gallicans and ultramontanes, are differences touching points on which the pope has not rendered an express and formal judgment, not differences as to the meaning of a papal judgment rendered. The controversy between the Jansenists and Jesuits was and is a serious controversy, touching the fundamental principles of the Christian faith, but it is not, and never was, a controversy as to the meaning of the papal rescripts, bulls, mandates, or constitutions, for as to that meaning both parties have never disagreed. Moreover, it is not a controversy between two sects in the church, for the Jansenists are a sect outside of the church and the Jesuits are not a sect at all: and, in their controversy with the Jansenists, the Jesuits are simply Catholics, defending the Catholic faith, as held by the whole church, against condemned heresies. We are surprised that a writer so well informed as an old school Presbyterian ought to be, should venture, in so respectable a periodical as the *Princeton Review*, to assert that the Jansenists are a sect in the church. Jansenism has been condemned by the Holy See as a heresy, and all who adhere to it are excommunicates, outside of the church, not within her pale. That they call themselves Catholics, and seek confirmation from the Holy See, while holding fast their heresy, as does each new Jansenistic Archbishop of Utrecht, on his election, amounts to nothing; for the confirmation is never granted, and the solicitation is answered only by a new bull of excommunication. The reviewer, therefore, proceeds on misinformation, and the instance he adduces is not in point.

The controversy between the Jesuit Fathers and the Jansenists is no more a controversy between two sects in the bosom of the church than is the controversy between us and the *Princeton Review*.

"But," says the reviewer, "a deeper question emerges here. What is the church? and what are the notes or criteria by which it is known? These are hinge-questions on which Mr. Brownson observes a prudent retinency, unless he can incidentally touch some shallow prejudice."—pp. 138. 139. That Dr. Brownson does not fully discuss these questions in his *Convert* is very possible, for in that work he was simply giving some leaves from his own experience, not writing a systematic treatise *de ecclesia;* but he has, as the reviewer must be well aware, very amply discussed them, without any "prudent retinency," in the pages of this *Review*, a periodical not, we presume, unknown to the reviewer, though he takes care never to mention it. If he found any gaps in the particular work before him, it would have been easy for him to have supplied them by reference to other well-known and accessible writings of the same author.

But what is the church according to the old school Presbyterian reviewer? "The church whose faith we recognize," he says, p. 139, "is the congregation of faithful men of every age and nation, who profess and practise the true religion." Then it would seem that there are *faithful* who are not of the true religion. What does the reviewer mean by *congregation?* When he says the church is the congregation, &c., he must understand, if he uses language correctly, not the faithful scattered through all manner of sects and communions, but the faithful collected and united under some sort of regimen in one body or communion. If not so collected and united, there is no congregation, but a segregation rather. "Who profess and practise the true religion." Then before you can determine the church, you must determine the religion, that is, you must learn the church by the religion, not the religion by the church. How then learn what is the true religion? The reviewer says:

"We agree that, while every man must judge for himself of every doctrine, whether it be of God, yet there is one faith of God's elect, and the mind of every real Christian is infallibly guided into that faith, as to the substance of it, by the Spirit of God. He has an unction from the Holy One whereby he knoweth all things, i. e., he is enabled to see and receive all essential 'things pertaining to life and godliness' set forth in the word of God. If he deviates radically from this faith of

the true church, the people of God, his judgment is neither more nor less his own private or personal judgment, than if he adopts it. But it is evidence that he is not guided by the Spirit of God. It betrays a wrong moral state. We do not hesitate to take the responsibility, as we must give account to God, of denouncing his heresy as anti-Christian, pernicious and fatal, and of excluding him from church privileges accordingly. Does Mr. Brownson deem civil and physical pains and penalties desirable also? If so, let him say so. The church, whose faith we recognize, is the congregation of faithful men of every age and nation who profess and practise the true religion. To renounce the faith of this church, we indeed denounce as fatal. If it be asked, how *this* church is known, we answer by those scriptural tests, doctrine and fruits. We are commanded not to receive those who come and bring not this doctrine; to try by a doctrinal test the spirits whether they be of God; and those are commended who try them which say they are apostles and are not, and find them liars. And if any have the clothing of sheep in this respect, but are really wolves, we are required to know them by their fruits. For in vain is it to cry Lord, Lord, and not do the things which he saith. If it be asked again, how we know what is the true doctrine and practice which distinguishes the true people of God; we answer again from the word of God. By this we know that we know Christ, because we keep his commandments. He that heareth and doeth these hath builded on a rock. All else is builded on the sand. Says John, 'he that is of God heareth us. He that is not of God heareth not us. His people are those who have his word dwelling in them."—pp. 139, 140.

Here we see the author claims the infallible guidance of the Spirit of God for every real Christian, and as he doubtless considers himself a real Christian, he holds that by virtue of the interior illumination of the Holy Ghost, he is infallible in all matters pertaining to "life and godliness." It is dangerous disputing with a man who claims to be infallible. But as every real Christian belongs to the church, every member of the church, according to the doctrine of our old school Presbyterian, must in all matters of faith, in all things pertaining to life and godliness, be personally infallible. This is pushing infallibility a little too far for us, staunch papists as we are. We hold the church collectively and officially is infallible in matters of faith and morals, but we are not prepared to admit that individual members are personally infallible, even those who are the greatest saints. We hold the pope, *ex officio*, as supreme doctor of the church, to be infallible, through the protection and assistance of the Holy Ghost, but we do not hold that even he personally, in his private capacity, as a private man, or a

private Christian, is infallible. It would seem that old school Presbyterians claim to be each and every one of them a pope, and more than we Catholics believe the real pope to be. Perhaps it is the wish to be himself pope that keeps the old school Presbyterian out of the church. But pass over this.

"The church whose faith we recognize, is the congregation of faithful men in every age and nation, who profess and practise the true religion." Who are these? "The true people of God." But who are the true people of God? They who profess and practise the true faith. But what is the true faith? "There is one faith of God's elect, and the mind of every Christian is infallibly guided into that faith by the Spirit of God." Does the reviewer mean to assert that one can be a real Christian before having or being guided into that faith? But again, what is that "one faith of God's elect?" "We agree that every man must judge for himself of every doctrine, whether it be of God." Then is that "one faith" what every man for himself judges it to be? No. What then? That into which "the mind of every real Christian is infallibly guided by the Spirit of God." But, dear Reviewer, you move only in a vicious circle. This interior guidance you speak of is individual, private, "hidden" with God, and cannot be adduced as a note or criterion of the church, because it is not externally discernible, and also because it requires itself to be tested. We must try the spirits, as you yourself concede, to see whether they be or be not of God. What is that test? The doctrine, you answer. Well, what is the test of doctrine? "The word of God." The word of God as authoritatively professed, by the Catholic Church? No. As each individual understands it for himself? No, for "there is one faith of God's elect," and he who deviates from it "gives evidence that he is not led by the Spirit of God," and "we do not hesitate to take the responsibility of denouncing his heresy as anti-Christian, pernicious, fatal, and of excluding him from church privileges accordingly." But you cannot say a man deviates from that faith, unless you know what it is. What then, again, is it? That into which "the mind of every real Christian is guided by the Spirit of God." We are back at our starting-point. The test of the church is the doctrine and practice, and the test of the doctrine and practice is the mind of the real Christian. What is the test of the mind of the real Christian? What is the church?

"The congregation of faithful men, who profess and practise the true religion." How are these to be known? "We answer, by those Scriptural tests, doctrine and fruits." But how know you the doctrine and fruits, which are the tests of the true religion? "If it be asked how we know what is the true doctrine and practice which distinguishes the true people of God; we answer again, from the word of God." As understood by whom? By everybody for himself? No, your only answer is, as understood by the true people of God. But who are these? Here begins over again the same series of questions, and the same series of answers, which leave us nearly as wise at the end as we were at the beginning. The reviewer seems to us to mistake the Scriptural authorities he quotes. "God's people," he says, "are those who have his Spirit dwelling in them." No doubt of it, but that is not the question. Who are they that have his Spirit dwelling in them? "Beloved," says the blessed apostle, "believe not every spirit, but try the spirits, whether they be of God: for there are many false prophets gone out into the world." "We are of God. He that knoweth God heareth us; he that is not of God heareth us not. By this we know the Spirit of truth and the spirit of error." Here is the test. They who gather with the apostolic communion and hear the apostolic authority are of God; they who separate from that communion and hear not that authority are not of God. You must then test the Spirit by the communion, or the church of the apostles, not the communion by the Spirit, doctrine, or practice. It is the misfortune of old school Presbyterianism that it is obliged to reverse the maxims of the apostles as well as those of common sense.

The reviewer offers some comments on the reasons Dr. Brownson alleges as those which induced him to become a Catholic. We make a brief extract:

"Mr. Brownson tells us how he was led to the doctrine of *Papal infallibility*. But he hardly pretends that one in a thousand is led to Popery by this route. He only claims that it may be of use to modern Pantheistic speculatists and skeptics. He does not pretend that it has any recognized place in Romanish theology. He informs us that the *archbishop* of Boston hesitated some time before he could receive one whose faith was founded on such a basis, and did not open the door of the church to him, until he placed himself more definitely upon Romish ground. Much of what he says is in the nature of a plea addressed to his fellow Papists to suffer the use of his new method which brought him to the feet of the Boston prelate, as likely to be effective with per-

sons imbued with the skeptical philosophy of our times."—pp. 140, 141.

Our reviewer tells us by implication that he has the infallible guidance of the Spirit of God, yet he makes many, many mistakes, which ordinary capacity and respect for truth, we should suppose, would have prevented. Dr. Brownson may or may not believe in papal infallibility, but he says not a single word in his book of his conversion to a belief in it. We have a high esteem for the venerable Bishop of Boston, and should be glad to have him receive the pallium, but we did not know before that he is actually an archbishop. Whether the reasons which led the author of *The Convert* to the church are those by which others are led or not, is a matter of no importance, since he does not give his as an exclusive method. The question for the reviewer is not whether they are usual or not, but whether they are sound or not. We find no attempt on his part to refute them. He simply says, after having given a brief account of the process of reasoning that brought the author to the church, "This is so exactly the method of transcendental ritualism, whether it leads to Mercersburg, Oxford, or Rome, it is hardly to be supposed that the author was exclusively indebted to his own invention for every part of it not derived from Leroux. It has long been the common property to several classes of ritualists."—p.143. Possibly, and yet possibly the author did not know it, and does not know it even yet. We wish the reviewer had named the class of ritualists that have brought out the philosophy and followed the method the author sets forth. We have no acquaintance with them, and have never before heard of them. There is no reason to doubt that the author is entitled to all the originality he claims, whether his views had previously been set forth by others or not.

The philosophy and process of reasoning, which, in connection with the undeniable historical facts in the case, led the author of *The Convert* to accept the church as authority for natural reason both as to herself and her doctrines, we can easily believe to be any thing but acceptable to an old school Presbyterian. The author, say what you will of his originality, has given the principles of the philosophy of the spiritual life, therefore of a philosophy which harmonizes in all its parts with the Incarnation, and established as the principle of all dependent life, the very principle on which the sacraments are efficacious, and therefore a philosophy which undoubtedly favors the views of both Mercersburg

and Oxford, touching what they call the sacramental system. The doctrine that all created life, whether in the natural order or the supernatural, is the resultant of two factors, object and subject, and that the form of the life is determined by the object, not by the subject, is in direct hostility to the essential principle of old school Presbyterianism, that the church derives her life from the faith of her members, and that the sacraments are efficacious only by the virtue of the recipient. Assuming what must be conceded, that the principles of life in the two orders are analogous, and that both orders copy the same original type in the divine mind, each in its degree, so that a correspondence between the natural and supernatural is possible, the philosophy of *The Convert* is a complete refutation of the sacramental theories of old school Presbyterians, and a strong presumption in favor of the Catholic doctrine. The philosophy of old school Presbyterianism, in so far as it recognizes the activity of the subject at all, and does not resolve itself into pure pantheism, is mere psychologism, and places the sole activity there is in the fact of life in the subject, leaving the object passive, that is, as if it were not. It is the subject that vivifies. The doctrine that the object creates the subject, and renders it active, living only by the presence and creative activity of the object, is incapable of being harmonized with the doctrine that the sacrament is operative only by the faith and virtue of the recipient, and can be harmonized only with the doctrine that the sacraments operate *ex opere operato*.

The process by which the author of *The Convert* was conducted to the church, is not that usually insisted upon by Catholic apologists, we admit, but it does not conflict with it, and the reviewer goes too far when he implies that the Roman prelate refused to admit the author to the communion of the church without his taking a ground more distinctly Roman. Such was not the fact. The author merely tells you that the Bishop of Boston, trained in a different school, did not accept the philosophy on which that process was based,—at least so the author feared,—and therefore he did not dare, for reasons he assigns, explain to him that process. Neither the Bishop of Boston nor any other bishop refused to receive the author on the ground stated; the difficulty was on the part of the author himself, in his own mind, in his own fears, which prevented him from dealing frankly with his instructor till he had confirmed

his conclusion by another process furnished by Catholic theologians themselves. The process, though it had brought him to seek the instructions of the bishop, was then waived as not any longer necessary for his own mind. When the temple is erected, you no longer need the scaffolding. But it does not from this follow that the process was not a legitimate one, that it may not be highly useful in the case of others, or that it is distrusted, far less rejected by the Catholic bishops.

The merit of the philosophy and reasoning sketched in *The Convert* is not that it enables one to conclude the church, for that no philosophy can do. Philosophy is in the natural order, and is only the exponent of natural reason; the church is in the supernatural order, and is not necessary to the existence or perfection of natural reason. Not being in the natural order, not necessary to its existence or its perfection as nature, the church cannot be concluded from natural reason. The supernatural is neither included in nature nor due to nature, and by natural reason alone we never do, and never can, demonstrate either its existence or its necessity. Its existence can be proved only by facts of a supernatural character, or evidences supernaturally supplied. It is not the pretension of the author of *The Convert* that he attains to the church by philosophy alone. His process of reasoning starts from philosophical and historical *data* combined. The historical *data* are what he calls providential men and providential facts,—prophets, prophecy, and miracles. Its peculiarity and its special merit are in the fact that it recognizes the common principle of the two classes of *data*, or the perfect correspondence of the natural and supernatural, and arrives at the church as a form of life, as a living body, proceeding from the divine-human life of its Founder. Hence, by it the Convert from the first moment of his recognition of Christianity, recognizes it as the church, not as an abstract doctrine, and from the first moment of his recognition of the church he recognizes her as growing out of and continuing, in some sort, the Incarnation. The Christianity to which the author was led, was not an abstract Christianity, or a Christianity slaughtered and dissected by schoolmen, but a living Christianity, living in the incarnate God,—a Christianity that in all and every part depends on the Incarnation, the Word made flesh. By bringing him to a Christianity that depends solely on the Incarnation, and grows vitally out of it, it brings him of

necessity to the Catholic Church as the embodiment of that Christianity, and therefore excludes all except the Church of Rome, for she alone can claim to be Catholic. The sacraments all depend on the Incarnation, and are modes or means by which the life which flows vitally from the Incarnation, in accordance with the principle of natural life, is generated, renewed, sustained, and augmented in the individual. Hence, the process of reasoning which starts from what the author calls the doctrine of life, and from the supernatural or miraculous *data* supplied by history, or by Providence in history, leads necessarily to the Catholic Church through her doctrine of the sacraments, and excludes from the Christian order of thought every form of Protestantism. We need not then wonder that our old school Presbyterian is blind to its merits, seeks to disparage it, and tries to have it understood that the Catholic bishops themselves distrust it. But we should like to see him grappling with that process itself, and attempting its refutation. Let him do that, and he will soon find that there is much more in it than he has dreamed of, and that he must either deny those very facts of history on which he himself depends, and the very principle of all created and dependent life, or accept the sacramental system urged upon him by Oxford and Mercersburg, and through it the Incarnation, and then the Roman Catholic Apostolic Church.

The reviewer complains that the author does not detail in his book the other process, the one ordinarily urged by Catholic writers, he speaks of. There was no occasion of his doing it, for he had done it in this *Review*, to which he refers, and it may be found drawn out at length in the works of our theologians, several of which he names. Probably another reason why he did not give it, was that he proposed simply to give the process by which he himself was brought to the church; and, also, because to have added the other process would have required a work double the size of the one he proposed to write.

The reviewer marks as if something erroneous or absurd the doctrine put forth by the author, that by the Incarnation "human nature is made the nature of God." This indicates that the reviewer does not accept the doctrine of the Incarnation; that he either does not believe that the Word was God, or that he denies that the Word was made flesh, that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh, and, therefore, according to his own confession and the assertion of the

apostle, he is governed by the spirit of antichrist. Does the reviewer mean to deny that our Lord is one divine person in two natures—the one human and the other divine? Does he mean to deny that the hypostatic union is a real union, and that Christ is perfect God and perfect man? If perfect man, has he not human nature, and is not that human nature by which he is perfect man as much *his* nature as the divine nature by virtue of which he is perfect God? How shrink, then, from saying that in the Incarnation human nature is raised to be really and truly the nature of God? Did the Word, the divine Person, assume human nature? Is that divine Person God? If so, then human nature has been assumed, raised to be the nature of God. If you deny it, and say it was not the divine that assumed the human, but the human that assumed the divine, we leave you to maintain the mysteries of the Trinity and the Incarnation against the Unitarians, as best you can. It is evident to us, and long has been, that comparatively few Protestants retain the orthodox doctrine on these two great mysteries, and that when they are not Tritheists, or Adoptionists, they are simply Sabellians, Nestorians, or Unitarians. The Mercersburg school, as the Oxford school, seems to us to have some orthodox views on these two mysteries, and hence their so-called romanizing tendencies.

We have shown that the old school Presbyterian moves in a vicious circle. The reviewer attempts to prove that such is the case with us.

"We think the Romish prelates show their wisdom in discarding or ignoring this theanthropic theory. Perhaps Mr. Brownson, as he writes more especially for the skeptical speculatists of the age, and in self-explanation, has done the best thing he could in advancing it. He has certainly shown his polemical tact in keeping back the real argument on which Papists rely in support of Papal infallibility and authority. He well argues with his Papal friends, that the objections to this doctrine in the 'non-Catholic' mind, lie beyond the reach of their ordinary methods. Their argument in this behalf is transparently vicious. They prove the Scriptures to be from God by the testimony of the church. But how do they prove theirs to be the true infallible and authoritative church? By the Scriptures, so far as they prove it at all. Whence did Mr. Brownson, for example, obtain proof, after waiving his divine-human theory, that the church is 'commissioned to teach all men and nations?' Whence but from the commission given by our Lord, and recorded in the gospels? Here is the vicious circle so often exposed by the Reformed theologians to the discomfiture of their adversaries. These

prove the Scriptures by the church, and the church by the Scriptures; i. e. they prove their premise by the conclusion they derive from it. There is no escape from this, unless they make the word of God the first and chief source of authority in divine things, and from that derive the doctrines, functions, prerogatives, and criteria of the church. But this brings in upon them the dreaded necessity of private judgment as to what the Scriptures teach, before we reach the infallibility and authority of the church. Still, if they assert, as they do, that the church in the person of the Pontiff, is the prime repository of infallible knowledge and authority, by which the inspiration of the Scriptures is proved; then, in answer to the question, how do we know which is the true church, and that it has these prerogatives? they must refer us to the Scriptures. This, on their own showing, is the Book of God, and a true church must conform to the criteria there given. Nor is there any other possible authority to which they can refer us, for the notes of the church, or for evidence that they have any better claim to be regarded as such, than the Mormons. Try as they will, they cannot break this vicious circle, and they must fail, as was most fully shown in the numberless futile though ingenious devices to parry the resistless arguments of the Reformers *de circulo Pontificio*."—pp. 145, 146.

All reasoning in some sense is in a circle, because nothing can be in the conclusion not affirmed in the premises; but not every circle is a *vicious* circle. As the premises from which the supernatural can be concluded do not lie in the natural order, Christianity, which is supernatural, cannot be demonstrated by natural reason, operating from natural *data* alone. We can demonstrate it only from supernatural *data*, or premises supernaturally furnished us, and therefore, in all our reasoning, we assume there is the supernatural, and that to some extent it is known. As the supernatural and Christianity are identical, all our reasoning in proof of the Christian religion, in some sense, proceeds in a circle. The supernatural, therefore Christianity, must be a fact, and a revealed fact, before we can begin to talk about it, indeed, before we can conceive of its actual or even its possible existence, for natural reason cannot transcend the natural order. All attempts to prove from natural *data* the fact or the possibility of the Christian religion, are fruitless, for God was not obliged to give us the supernatural, and might, if he had chosen, have created us, as we are now born. Gioberti labors to prove that man has a natural faculty, which he calls the faculty of the superintelligible; but the superintelligible and the supernatural are not the same. The superintelligible may be in the same order with the intelli-

gible, and be superintelligible only in relation to us, through the impotency of our faculties; but the supernatural is of another order, and no natural faculty can naturally rise to its conception. The revelation of it must precede the conception, and therefore, in a certain sense, all our reasonings about it, for it, or even against it, must and do assume the fact of its revelation. Perhaps, this fact alone, since we do all reason more or less about it, is a conclusive proof that the supernatural exists, and that God has revealed it.

Now, with regard to the charge of the reviewer, we beg leave to say that, if we reason in a circle, it is not a *vicious* circle. We "prove the church by the Scriptures," he says, "and the Scriptures by the church;" but, even if so, we do not prove the church by the Scriptures in the same sense in which we prove them by the church. We take the Scriptures, when reasoning with those who admit, or profess to admit them, not as the word of God, but as authentic historical documents, to prove the foundation and commission of the church; and then, we take the church, not to prove that the Scriptures are authentic historical documents, but that they are divinely inspired, the written word of God. We deny not that there is here a circle, but that there is here any thing resembling what logicians call a *vicious* circle. The argument used in *The Convert* the reviewer concedes is not a *vicious* circle; the argument he accuses the author of suppressing, and which Catholic authors usually insist on, is just as little of a vicious circle. The author considered it defective for the non-Catholic mind in the present day, but not at all for the reasons the reviewer imagines. That argument is not defective because it begins with the Scriptures, for that it does not; but because it begins with reason in a fuller and more perfect state than we now find it in most men, and does not show with sufficient clearness and distinctness the principle of the spiritual life, or of the correspondence of the two orders, the natural and the supernatural. In one sense, it is too rigidly logical, keeps at too great a distance from the supernatural, and does not draw enough on it in proving the reality of the Christian order. It attempts to prove the supernatural as an abstract dogma rather than as a life, and its author as a teacher rather than as a regenerator—the founder of a doctrine rather than the creator of a new order. The objection he urges is the reverse of that the reviewer supposes, and it is an objection not to its logic, but to its

practical efficacy with minds which have no confidence in logic, nay, have a horror of logic. If men were in our days more logical, less sceptical, and less unable to appreciate solid, rigid, and cogent reasoning, we should have no fault to find with the ordinary method. But, taking the mass of non-Catholics as we now find them, we want a method less abstract, and that draws more in advance on the life that is brought to light through the revelation itself. It is the supernatural life rather than the supernatural revelation that we would begin by proving. The reviewer mistakes entirely the order of objections the author of *The Convert* suggests against that process, as he does the process itself.

The reviewer apparently forgets that while he is making sad merriment on what he calls the "circulo pontificio," he himself falls into the worst of all *vicious* circles. He takes the inspiration of the Scriptures to prove the inspiration of the writers, and then the inspiration of the writers to prove the inspiration of the Scriptures, and he has no way of getting out of that vicious circle, but by an appeal to tradition, to what the church has always and everywhere believed,—an appeal, as we have seen, fatal to him as a Protestant. We can make that appeal, but not an old school Presbyterian, for with him tradition begins fifteen hundred years too late to be of any authority. The reviewer finds the notes or criteria of the church in doctrine and practice, and his notes or criteria of doctrine in the Scriptures. But he must prove the Scriptures to be divinely inspired writings, before they can be adduced as authority for doctrine and practice, and he must prove the inspiration of the writers before he can allege them as inspired writings. Then he must prove the inspiration of the sacred writers before he can establish his notes or criteria of the church. Now, all we have to do in order to be able to assert our church is to prove the apostolic commission, and this and even more he must prove before he can assert the inspiration of the sacred writers. If he can prove that commission without falling into a vicious circle, nothing hinders us from doing the same. The reviewer can take the Bible as authority, only on the authority of the commission given by our Lord to his apostles. To establish that commission is the first step with him as well as with us, but when we have established that we have established all; but he has still to establish the genuineness, authenticity, and inspiration, as well as the true meaning, of the sacred text. The commission of the

apostles establishes at once our church, because she holds immediately and uninterruptedly from the apostles. It is far less labor to establish the apostolicity of the church, than it is to establish even the genuineness, to say nothing of the inspiration, of the Scriptures. Let the reviewer understand that we are not reduced to the necessity of accepting his notes and criteria of the church before we can assert or vindicate our own. We can assert our church some stages before he can even approach the question of the inspiration of the Scriptures. It is far shorter and far easier to prove that she is the church of God, than it is to prove that they are the word of God, because she must be proved to be the church of God before they can be asserted to be his word.

The reviewer evidently is not well acquainted with what we ordinarily allege as motives of credibility, and he seems not even to understand what we mean by motives of credibility. We do not mean by them motives of faith or belief, as he supposes, but reasons which prove the church credible. He says, p. 147, none of our "so-called motives *to* credibility or belief in the church have any weight, except as they are derived from the Scriptures." This is, with his leave, a mistake, for the motives of credibility which he must adduce in case of the Scriptures themselves, amply suffice of themselves to establish the credibility of the church. He is, as we have seen, obliged to establish the divine commission and inspiration even of the apostles and sacred writers independently of the inspiration of the Scriptures, before he can use them as authority in matters of faith, and a small part of the reasoning he must resort to answers our purpose, and that reasoning is as open to us as it is to him, to say the least. But this whole question has been so often and so fully discussed in the pages of our *Review*, that it is wholly unnecessary for us to pursue it further on this occasion. The reviewer as interested in the question, as a man of learning and intelligence, reads of course our *Review*, and to its pages, almost everywhere, we refer him, if he is not satisfied with what we have now said.

The question, what is the church? is certainly the great question, but it is one that cannot be answered by neglecting the account the church gives of herself. As the supernatural can be known only by means of itself, so that the church is can be learned only from herself. The notes or criteria of the church are and must be furnished in great part by herself, as the representative of the supernatural

order. The proof that she is God's church is in her history. The supernatural must prove itself, for it is only from the supernatural that we can learn the notes or criteria of the supernatural. She, and she alone, answers to the conception mankind ever since the apostles have had of the church of Christ, that of his body, in which he lives, and to which he communicates his own life. She proves she is what she professes to be by actually being and doing what she professes. She is not of yesterday; she is not a new kingdom just set up in the world; she has been in the world from the time of the apostles, has inherited their doctrine and their authority, and the promises made to them. She derives from God through them, and fills up the whole space of time between them and us. We might with far more propriety deny that the United States are the United States than that she is the church, the apostolic church. Indeed, in another form or condition she has existed from the beginning of the world. Before the coming of our Lord she had her tabernacle among men, believed in him who was to come, preserved his revelations, waited for his coming, and prepared the world to receive him. Since his coming she has borne witness to his having come, has continued visibly in some sort his Incarnation, and has been to him his Spouse, his Beloved, his Beautiful One, and the joyful mother of his children. Her credentials are in her person, on her face, in her position, her beautiful love, her charity, her life, her power, her deeds. We will not here attempt to vindicate her claims. Eighteen hundred years have vindicated them, and her very existence to-day, in spite of all the malice of men and the rage of hell, is a triumphant proof that she is God's church, and would be even were the Bible lost and its sacred pages forgotten.

There are many other things in the reviewer's essay that we would comment on if our space would permit. We have not taken it upon us to refute every thing the reviewer alleges against the author of *The Convert*. He described Presbyterians and Presbyterianism as he found them, and stated nothing which he had not experienced. If Presbyterians are better now or elsewhere than were those he describes, he will rejoice to be assured of the fact. The reviewer complains that the author is harsh and spiteful towards Presbyterianism; certainly, he does not give a flattering picture of it, but we think it appears in his pages to as good advantage as it does in the article we have been comment-

ing on. We can conceive nothing more harsh, bitter, arrogant, or illiberal than the Presbyterianism of our reviewer. He cannot allude civilly even once to the Catholic Church. He never calls her, even by way of courtesy, by her proper name, and speaks of her supreme visible head in terms and tones which betray a most deadly hate. All this we set down to his old school Presbyterianism, for as a man we have no doubt he is well bred, cultivated, amiable, and estimable. If his Presbyterianism were out of the way, we have no doubt that we should find him a pleasant companion, an agreeable, a firm, and an affectionate friend. We have found no form of Protestantism so unfavorable to the finer and more genial qualities of our nature as old school Presbyterianism, and yet aside from their religion, we know many, many Presbyterians whom we could tenderly love, and highly esteem. It is only when the piety fit is on them, and they think they must be saintly, that we find them disagreeable. Hence we charge all that is sour, morose, arrogant, overbearing, or repulsive in their manners and conduct, solely to their Presbyterianism.

Speaking of arrogance, our readers cannot have failed to observe that our reviewer has it in large measure, even for a Presbyterian. He has no church, believes in no church, but an aggregation of Presbyterians, has no authority, and confesses he has none, and yet he claims a power which exceeds that claimed by us for the pope, as vicar of Christ. Uncommissioned, without a particle of authority from God to teach, he yet presumes to have the right to declare what are and what are not the doctrines of God, and to deny the Christian name to those who do not accept the doctrines he declares to be essential. "We do not hesitate *to take* the responsibility," he says. What business has he to take any responsibility in the matter? Who authorized him to do so? Who made him a judge in matters of doctrine? A modest man would not *take* the responsibility, he would wait till it was imposed on him by one having authority. We know there were prophets, of whom the Lord says, "I have not sent these prophets, yet they ran;" but we have never learned that this was said in their commendation. Really humble men will wait till they are sent before they run.

The reviewer contends that Dr. Brownson has injured his own reputation by his misrepresentation of Presbyterianism. We do not concede, and the reviewer does not prove, that

he has misrepresented it, but the reviewer has misrepresented Catholicity, and in no instance represented it truly. Will that injure his reputation? He contends that the author cannot be trusted to teach Catholicity, because he shows himself ignorant of Presbyterianism. We might with greater force argue that the reviewer cannot be trusted to teach Presbyterianism, because he proves himself grossly ignorant of Catholicity. But enough. We bring our remarks to a close. If the reviewer will leave off personalities, and consent to discuss the questions at issue between him and us, dispassionately, calmly, fairly, on their merits, we shall be happy to meet him again. We have no doubt of his ability to do ample justice to his cause, if he will but keep cool, and exercise his reason instead of displaying his passion. We copy the closing paragraph of his article, as the one that does him less discredit than any thing else in his attack on *The Convert*, and proves that, if his Presbyterianism were out of the way, or if he could forget his intense hatred of the church, he would be a fair-minded critic, a liberal reviewer, and an accomplished gentleman. He would, no doubt, have done better, if he had had a better cause :

> We take pleasure in adding that there are passages of great power and truthfulness in the volume, which we should be glad to quote, if we had room. In rising from sensism, materialism, and atheism to Romanism with all its errors, there is of necessity a process of sloughing off many heresies, and emerging into the light of many precious truths. His reasonings on some of these points are luminous, compact, and forcible. The argument by which he proves that Universalism logically ends in obliterating all 'objective distinction between virtue and vice;' his analysis of the pantheism of Cousin, and refutation of the psychology and philosophy of all those forms of modern transcendental idealism, which destroy objective truth and being; his account of Dr. Channing and the Boston Unitarians; his protraiture of *novi homines* suddenly become rich, and of the debasing effect of their coarse and flashy extravagance on themselves, their families and society, altogether with many other touches of his strong and graphic pen upon various persons and things, give an incidental interest to the book, which, as to its main object—the exposition and vindication of himself and his faith—is a failure, not for lack of ability in the author, but from the stubborn character of his subject. He has proved, indeed, that we need an infallible guide. But he has not proved that guide to be the Roman Pontiff, in place of the Word of God."

A LETTER TO PROTESTANTS.

[From Brownson's Quarterly Review for 1848.]

I.—INTRODUCTION.

My Brethren:

I have for some time meditated addressing you a few words on the subject of religion. I was born and bred a Protestant, and for more than half the allotted term of our natural life, my hopes, interests, and affections were bound up with yours. You are my brethren according to the flesh; you have the same nature that I have, the same wants and capacities, the same passions and affections, the same Creator and Redeemer, the same hell to escape and heaven to win, and you must not think it strange that I find myself unable to look upon any thing that affects your present or future welfare as foreign or indifferent to me.

Moreover, I was for nearly twenty years, however little esteemed, or worthy to be esteemed, one of your ministers or religious teachers, and had all the authority to teach that any of your ministers have or can have. That authority, be it in reality something or be it nothing, you have by no act of yours revoked, or attempted to revoke; and if in my own estimation and that of my church, I was always and am now only a simple layman, I was and am still in yours a clergyman, with all the right to address you on religious subjects I ever had, or that your present ministers have. You cannot, and you will not, then, think me arrogant or impertinent in calling your attention to the great question at issue between Catholics and Protestants, and you will, I venture to hope, receive not unkindly the remarks I propose to offer, and give them at least the consideration their own importance deserves.

It is true, in taking the liberty to address you, I assume that I have the truth, and that you have it not; but this is no more than every one does and must assume who writes in defence of his own doctrine against those who contradict it. The assumption lies in the nature of the case, and cannot be avoided; but I assure you, my brethren, that I assume nothing on my own account, or as due to any real or supposed merit of my own. I do not speak in my own name,

nor on my own authority. If I have the truth, which you as Protestants have not, you may be assured that I have not obtained it by any moral or intellectual superiority of my own. I have found it not by my own virtue, wisdom, or sagacity,—of which I think full as meanly as you do or can, for I know better than you my own personal unworthiness and extreme liability to err and to sin when left to myself; but through the great mercy of God, who had revealed it, and has been pleased by his grace to open my eyes to see it, and to incline and strengthen my heart to believe it. It is all his doings, and his, not mine, is all the glory. It is his word, not mine, that I ask you to believe; and my purpose in writing you is to prove that it is his, not mine, not yours, nor any man's. In proving this I myself count for nothing; and in trying to help you to find the inestimable treasure I have found, I am only doing my duty,—obeying the great law of charity, which bids me love my neighbor as myself.

In the remarks I propose to offer, I must request you to make no account of me personally. The point you are to consider in the discussion I wish to provoke, is not who speaks, but what is said, for I propose nothing and ask you to believe nothing on my personal authority. Truth, as you well know, is independent of you and of me, and remains always unaffected by our private convictions be they what they may. The question is not what you or I think, or believe, but, what we ought to think, and what we must believe in order to believe the truth. As truth itself is independent of our private convictions, so is the evidence of truth, or the reasons why any proposition must be held to be true. The question must turn on the sufficiency or insufficiency of the evidence, not on him who adduces it. If sufficient it remains so, however unworthy or even personally offensive, is he who adduces it; and if insufficient, no worth or acceptableness of him who adduces it can supply its defectiveness. My reasoning must stand or fall on its own merits, and it is on its merits, not on mine, that you are to pass judgment. If it is intrinsically conclusive, you will be bound to accept it; if not, you will be free to reject it, whether you like or dislike me personally. No man is excusable for rejecting the truth because he dislikes the one who tells it, nor for embracing error, because he loves and is charmed with those who advocate it.

Neither you nor I, my brethren, have, or can have any real interest in deceiving or in being deceived, in teaching

or in embracing what is not true. Error will be error, though all the world agree in declaring it to be truth, and truth will be truth, though all the world deny it, and rise up in arms against it. No error is ever harmless; no truth is ever hurtful. Error is always evil; truth is always good, for supreme truth and supreme good are identical, one and the same, in the order of reality. Good is simply the true regarded as the object of the will, and truth is the good regarded as the object of the intellect. It is always madness, or worse than madness, to war against the truth, for it is only in knowing and obeying truth that we ever do or ever can receive any good.

You are very likely attached to the opinions in which you have been brought up, and may find it painful to think of renouncing them; you may even think your honor is engaged in adhering to opinions you have once professed, and that it would be disgraceful to abandon them; but you should not forget that if false they can avail you nothing, and that in parting with them you lose nothing, if you obtain the truth in exchange. It is no mark of wisdom or goodness to love one's own opinions more than truth, or to fear to submit them to a rigid examination lest reasons may be discovered for rejecting them. It is, no doubt, painful to bid farewell to old friends, to part from old acquaintances, and old familiar scenes, and where the habits of life have been once formed, to find ourselves strangers in a strange country, beholding only strange scenes, and strange faces, and hearing only strange voices which touch no familiar chord, and awaken no old household feelings, but not therefore must we refuse to abandon the haunts of vice and evil companions for the society of the pure and virtuous. To renounce faith is indeed dishonorable and sinful, for faith is God's word, and always infallible, and to renounce it is to renounce Him whose word it is, and to give up truth for falsehood,—a greater folly than to exchange gold for brass, and which never can be committed save through wilful blindness and base and corrupt motives. But to renounce for love of truth on good and sufficient grounds, opinions once cherished, is neither sinful nor dishonorable. No wise man loves his own opinions better than the truth, or voluntarily closes his eyes and refuses to examine them, lest he discover reason for renouncing them.

You claim, my brethren, to be reasonable; you make it your boast that you respect reason, and our reproach that

we are both unable and afraid to reason. I come before you to invite and even to press you to reason,—not indeed on the mysteries of Faith, for they are confessedly above reason, and to be received, if received at all, on authority, but on the credibility of the authority which proposes and claims the right to propose them. This is a question within the province of reason, although it may also transcend it. I come before you not to dogmatize, but to reason; and although I hold, as does every Christian, that there are questions to which reason is not competent, I shall confine myself strictly to those to which reason is competent, and in regard to which you and I can meet on a common ground, and appeal to a common authority. I may have profited by my Catholic faith and my study of Catholic theology, but I shall in the present discussion insist on no point, prior to the establishment of the authority of the church, which does not come within the scope of reason, and which cannot be settled without appeal to supernatural revelation. Come, then, my brethren, and let us reason together.

II.—PROTESTANTISM A FAILURE.

I confess, my brethren, that it seems to me strange that there should be any need of the discussion to which I invite your attention. Has it never struck you as remarkable that you, who call yourselves Christians, and claim to be the more advanced portion of Christendom, should be at this late day occupied in settling questions as to what is Christian truth, what is "the faith once delivered to the saints," rather than in applying it to the heart and the life; that you should be employed in choosing the site and digging the foundations of the Christian Temple, instead of assembling within its sacred enclosure to pay your vows to its divine Founder? Is it not strange that in this nineteenth century, there should be among you doubt and uncertainty even as to the primary doctrines, the very fundamental principles of the Gospel, and that not a few of your number are putting Pilate's question anew, What is truth? Is it not very singular that even large numbers among you, bearing your common name, and rallying with you under a common banner whenever there is a question of opposition to the church, regard the great primary questions, whence we come, why we are here, and whither we go, as unanswered, if not indeed, as unanswerable questions?

Without an answer to these great primary questions we know not the purpose of our existence, have no rule of life, and are like the beasts that perish. Can you reasonably suppose that mankind have subsisted six thousand years on this globe, if not, as some of your philosophers would persuade us, for a much longer time, in total ignorance of their origin and destiny? Has day never dawned for the human race? Are we here with darkness behind us, before us, and within us? It cannot be. Whence comes it then, that you have no clear, satisfactory, and indisputable answer to these great questions; that your minds are disturbed by doubts, and your hearts filled with anxiety; that so many of you feel that nothing is determined and fixed, that all is loose and floating, and in the bitterness of disappointment, and from the depths of despair, are calling upon all nature, the heavens and the earth, the living and the dead, to disclose the secret of our origin and destiny, to declare the purpose of our existence, and settle for us the rule of life?

The fact is undeniable, as none of you will pretend to question. It is seen in all your movements, it is evinced in all your internal controversies, it is read in all your theological and popular literature. Whence comes it? My brethren, the cause is nigh you, and plain before your eyes, if you will but do yourselves the justice to open them to see it. Your ministers, whom in an evil hour, you preferred to the priests of the Most High God and the anointed pastors of his people, have misled you. They have turned your faces, without your perceiving it, away from God, your original and end, and have caused you to lose sight of the truth he had revealed for your guidance and consolation. They have, consciously, or unconsciously, given you their words for his, the chaff for the wheat, a faint and mutilated shadow for the substance. By inducing you to cast off the authority of the church, and compelling you to rely on private judgment, or at least on the Scriptures interpreted by private judgment, which inevitably leads to interminable disputes, innumerable sects, and endless contradictions, they have rendered for you what was clear and certain in God's words, dark and doubtful, religion a chaos of jarring and discordant elements, theology an unmeaning jargon, and piety a reproach. Their utter inability to agree among themselves on a single positive doctrine, their variable and incoherent speech, their sectarian wrath and bigotry, their arrogant claims and defective titles, their pretended faith

yet obvious doubt, and their boasted interior light, yet undeniable spiritual ignorance, have, as you well know, disgusted men of sober practical sense, who know no other teachers, or conclude that all religious teachers must be like them, sown in their minds the seeds of universal scepticism, and induced them to look upon all religion as mere priestcraft and superstition, and all pretensions to divine revelation as ridiculous and absurd. It is thus they have darkened your minds on religious subjects, perverted your hearts, robbed you of the supernatural graces bestowed on you by a beneficent Father, wounded and left you half dead in the street. They have treated you, as was treated the man mentioned in the Gospel, who went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among robbers.

I do not charge your ministers, my brethren, with having really intended to bring about the deplorable state of things of which they as well as you are the victims. Evil is rarely, if ever, willed for the sake of evil. Men like it not for the evil, but for the good they hope to obtain from it. Eve did not suffer herself to be seduced for the sake of bringing sin and death into the world, but that her eyes might be opened, and she and her posterity might be as gods, knowing good and evil, that is, knowing them as God knows them, without learning them from the will or law of a superior; yet none the less did sin and death follow her rash act, and become the sad inheritance of mankind. "There is a way which seemeth just to a man; but the ends thereof lead to death."

The Reformers and early Protestant ministers had no wish, it is fair to presume, to introduce evil for the sake of evil. They probably persuaded themselves that their movement was compatible with Christian faith and morals, nay, that it was even necessary to preserve religion in its purity, integrity, freedom, and vigor; but they are none the less responsible for the legitimate consequences of their acts, for they acted against established authority, had no regular commission, were forewarned of the consequences that would follow, and if they did not foresee, they might and should have foreseen them. The principles they asserted, and the arguments they used in order to defend their revolt from the church, and the innovations they introduced, they were told in the outset could be turned with equal, if not with more, power and effect against divine revelation, and even the existence of God, and they have been so turned,

as you have seen in Voltaire and D'Holbach, and other philosophers and free-thinkers.

I am willing to concede that your ministers were far enough from intending to attack the foundations of faith, and as a matter of fact they have written several learned and able works against unbelief, and in defence of religion; but in these works they have been unfaithful to the principle of the Protestant Reformation; they have borrowed Catholic principles and arguments,—conclusive when urged by us, because in harmony with all our principles and doctrines, and because we can and do admit them in all their logical extent and consequences; but of no practical value when urged by them, because they deny them whenever they reason against Catholics and in defence of their own innovations, and because they practically declare that they themselves have no confidence in them by remaining outside of the church. Actions speak louder than words. The rebel chief, in arms against his sovereign, cannot preach loyalty with much effect. His practical disloyalty more than neutralizes his speculative or theoretical loyalty. The practical rejection of the Catholic Church by your ministers, does more to spread unbelief and immorality than all the books they can write can do to arrest them.

The experience of three hundred years has proved that Christianity is defensible only on Catholic principles. Every attempt to defend it on other principles has failed. High-toned Protestant churchmen have tried to defend it on historical grounds, but have failed, because historical Christianity and Catholicity are undeniably identical. The Catholic Church is clearly the church of history. Evangelical Protestants have tried to defend it on the principle of interior illumination, and have succeeded only in reducing it to a wild enthusiasm or a savage fanaticism. Rationalists have tried to defend it on rationalistic principles, and have ended in obtaining merely a cumbrous and not very satisfactory philosophy. Socialists and progressists attempt, in our day, to defend it on humanistic principles, and obtain as the result of their labors a meagre humanism, which is egotism or socialism, pantheism or atheism, according to the special aspect under which it is viewed.

Your present condition, my brethren, is only a necessary consequence of what you call the reformation. Voltaire and Rousseau are the continuators of Luther and Calvin, as Proudhon and Pierre Leroux are the continuators of

Voltaire and Rousseau. Modern free-thinkers and unbelievers only reproduce against all religion the arguments which your ministers use against the church. It is in vain that your doctors write able and learned works against them, for they refute their own arguments and deny the very principles on which they rest, whenever they undertake to justify their protest against the Catholic Church.

Religion, if religion, is law, the supreme law for all men, which all are bound to obey in all things,—in thought, word, and deed. Whether there be religion or not, is a question to be settled hereafter. I do not now assume that there is, for that is the point I propose to prove; but I assume, if religion there be, it is the supreme law for all men. It must then emanate from God, the only Lawgiver, and consequently is denied whenever the principle of authority is denied; for obviously where there is no authority there can be no law, and no obligation of obedience. A religion, so-called, emanating from man, dependent on man's will or reason, or subject in any respect to his private judgment, or his private convictions, is simply no religion at all, because it lacks the essential element of all religion, that is, law. It is human, and nothing human is of itself law to man, for law is the precept or command of the superior to the inferior. The moment, then, that your ministers seek to arrest the progress of unbelief and immorality, and to defend religion not as philosophy, as speculation, as opinion, but as religion, as law, they are obliged to recognize and assert somewhere, for some one, authority competent in all things to legislate for all men.

But I need not tell you that your ministers are not free to recognize and assert such authority, because they have to defend their position as Protestants against Catholics, and they can do that only by denying all authority. Their well-known denial of the authority of the church to declare and apply in all things pertaining to salvation the law of God, involves the denial of authority itself, let who will claim it; for they deny, as you know, the authority of the church, not on the ground that she is a false and corrupt church, and the authority is not hers, but another's; but they assert that she is a false and corrupt church because she claims authority. What they in reality object to in the church is that she claims to have authority from God to teach and apply his law, or supreme authority, under him, over faith and morals, reason and conscience, and her

simple claim of this authority is alleged as conclusive proof that she is false and corrupt, which she can be only on the supposition that no such authority exists, and that supposition is not possible without the denial of all authority, authority itself.

Yet to deny authority itself, is to deny the sovereignty of God. If God is really sovereign, he has and must have authority to legislate for both reason and conscience, and consequently the right to delegate that authority to whom he pleases. Nothing prevents him, if such be his will, from instituting a church and delegating to her, under his direction, authority to teach and apply his laws. Then the simple fact that the church claims that authority, as a delegated authority,—and she claims it only as such,—would of itself be neither conclusive nor presumptive evidence that she is false and corrupt, and before her claiming it could be alleged as any thing against her, it would be necessary to prove either that God has not delegated it, or, if he has, he has not delegated it to her, but to another. Your ministers must know this, and therefore since they make the very claim itself evidence of error, corruption, "intolerable arrogance," as they express themselves, I have the right, nay, I am bound, to conclude that they deny that any authority over faith and conscience exists, and therefore that they, consciously or unconsciously, deny the sovereignty of God, the principle of all religion, and of all morality.

I do not think, my brethren, that you can successfully dispute this conclusion. What in fact is it that your ministers tell you? Do they not ring it continually in your ears, that our church by claiming authority under God to teach and apply the divine law, invades the sacred rights of conscience, enslaves the mind, and deprives man of his natural freedom? Is it so much our doctrines to which you yourselves object, as it is the authority of the church to propose them? Your difficulty, you well know, does not lie in accepting the doctrines, but in accepting them as doctrines taught by authority, and therefore as precepts or commands. What you have an invincible repugnance to is believing because bidden to believe, and forbidden to disbelieve. It denies your independence, and subjects you to the will of a master. You do not like this. You insist that your own reason, as your own, shall be a law unto itself, and your intense hatred of the church

arises not from the particular doctrines she teaches, but from the fact that she insists that what she teaches shall be law for both your reason and your will. You would have no serious quarrel with her, if she recognized your right of private judgment, and acknowledged you to be in all respects free to believe or not to believe her doctrines. Some of you have been known to boast that you hold "all Roman doctrine, the damnatory clauses excepted;" that is, all but the authority that proposes them, and you all profess to believe things, when you profess to believe any thing, as hard for reason to digest as you can pretend are any which the church proposes. It is not the doctrine that disturbs you, it is the authority. That you cannot endure, because it denies what you call your rights, because it subjects faith and conscience, which you hold are of right free and independent. But what is this but denying the sovereignty of God in regard to human intellect and will?

Then, again, for what do you adhere to Protestantism? Certainly not for any thing positive that it teaches. It teaches nothing positive; it denies many things the Catholic Church teaches, but it teaches nothing affirmative in addition to what she teaches; it contains no new revelation of duty, throws no new light on any of the great problems of life,—of God, man, or nature, and presents no new motives to reason for believing, or to the will for obeying. You are aware of this, and do not even pretend to value Protestantism for any positive doctrine it teaches or professes to teach. You are quite ready to concede that Luther and Melancthon, Calvin and Beza, Henry and Elizabeth, Socinus and Gentilis, were far enough from being saintly characters, and far enough, too, from having rightly apprehended the teachings of our Lord, yet you revere them as great and glorious reformers, who have conferred the most inestimable advantages on the human race. But wherefore? I hear you all answer, "Because they broke the tyranny of Rome, emancipated us from the spiritual thraldom in which she held us, vindicated the rights of conscience, conquered for us religious liberty, and secured freedom to every man to choose his own religion," —that is, the right of each man to form his own belief, and to prescribe to himself his own duties. Hence you boast Protestantism as that which liberates you, asserts your own individual freedom and independence, and declares your own private reason and conscience your only law. But

evidently in doing this, it declares reason and conscience independent of all law, and therefore that God himself has no authority over them.

As your ministers can maintain their position as Protestants against the Catholic Church only by asserting the unrestricted right of private judgment, which is the assertion of man's independence and the denial of God's sovereignty, it is clear that they cannot succeed in defending religion against unbelief and immorality, because religion is itself the assertion of God's absolute sovereignty and man's absolute dependence. They can only assert against unbelievers what they deny against Catholics, and thus reduce their reasoning to zero. Unbelievers always feel this when they read the learned apologies of Protestant ministers for Christianity, and reply to their authors: Either you prove nothing against us, or you condemn yourselves. If these principles and arguments are good against us, they are equally good against you as Protestants. If you believe what you allege against us as free-thinkers and unbelievers, you have no right to be Protestants, but are bound to return to the church, and implore her to pardon your rebellion against her; if you believe what you allege against the church in your own defence, if you hold that mental freedom which you claim as the glory of your Protestantism to be the right of every man, wherefore do you complain of us? If you have the right to reject religion as law, wherefore do you labor to induce us to accept it? If it is not law, how can it be obligatory on us? Why should you be free rather than we? If on the strength of your private judgment you were free to reject religion as interpreted by the pope, why are not we free on the strength of ours to reject it as interpreted by you? If private judgment is good for you, is it not equally good for us? Your ministers have nothing to reply. Having asserted the supremacy of private judgment in order to get rid of the authority of the church, they have precluded themselves from all right to assert religion, for the simple reason that religion, if religion at all, is the law for private judgment itself, and therefore the direct contradictory of the essential Protestant principle.

But your ministers, my brethren, have not only not been able to offer any solid defence of religion on their own principles, but, by borrowing and misapplying our principles and arguments, they have made its defence, even by Cath-

olics, much more difficult than it would otherwise have been. The evil they do by their writings against us is small in comparison with the evil they do by their writings in defence of Christianity. They are far more formidable as allies than as enemies. The weakest Christians are in general able to protect themselves against Satan when he appears in his own proper character; it is only when he comes to them in the guise of an angel of light that they are in danger. Evidences of Christianity by Protestant ministers are a by-word among even yourselves. There are few of you who do not feel that on Protestant principles they establish nothing. You see that on your ground they are inconclusive;—why, then, you ask, not on ours? Why shall the same principles and arguments which, urged by Protestants, are obviously inconclusive, be held to be conclusive when urged by Catholics? The reason is not apparent to all; and as you have in the outset a strong prejudice against us and have settled it in your own minds that our church is false, the principles and arguments your ministers borrow from us are regarded by you as inconclusive, because you easily see that they are as strong for us as for religion itself. If they conclude any thing for your ministers, they conclude too much. You thus imbibe a strong prejudice against them and will not give them their due weight when we urge them. The habit of rejecting them when urged by your own ministers leads you to reject them when urged by us. We seem to be only repeating what they have already said and insisting on what has already been rejected in their writings as inconclusive. "Our ministers have said all that," you say. "Give us something else, something they have not said, if you expect us to listen." But this is not always convenient; for the principles and arguments they have borrowed are those which are nearest at hand and such as you are best able to appreciate. These are sound and good in themselves, and it is only because they have been misused that they do not appear so to you. But your ministers have made them so familiar to you in their misapplication of them that you will, when we adduce them, no longer stop to see whether we do not apply them differently and if, as we apply them, they are not conclusive. Thus it is that your ministers have not only failed themselves to arrest the progress of unbelief, and its consequent immorality, but they have deprived us of our readiest and best arguments against

them and compelled us to resort to others which are less within the reach, and less adapted to the understanding, of those who need them.

Defences of this sort from your ministers obviously amount to nothing, because their authors themselves refute, or at least deny, the principle on which they rest, whenever they leave the defence of religion against unbelievers, and take up that of Protestantism against the church. As far as the influence of your ministers goes, it must always be stronger in favor of their principles as Protestants, than in favor of the Christian principles they adopt from us, and urge against free-thinkers and infidels. Every human movement has its principle which, unless Providence intervenes to arrest it, it does and must obey. In vain do your ministers preach moderation, and warn their followers against going too far, or pushing matters to a dangerous extreme; in vain do they attempt to prevent the disciple from carrying out the principle of his master to its last logical results. In the master it may be restrained, and to some extent modified by other principles which he has inconsistently retained from his early education or belief; but in the disciple these principles are eliminated, and the teaching of the master is reduced to his proper principles, and pushed to its strictly logical consequences. You may complain of this, but you cannot prevent it.

Hence, as you are aware, all Protestantism is always in a process of development and continually altering or varying its forms by rejecting more and more of the Catholic doctrines it at first retained. No form of Protestantism ever remains for any length of time what it was at first. The principles asserted as the ground of dissent from Rome received a development unexpected by their partizans even in the lifetime of the Reformers themselves. Both Luther and Calvin, as the movement went on, were carried further than they originally intended. The last days of Luther were spent in battling against those who were for pushing his principles to a logical extreme from which he recoiled.

Finally, my brethren, your ministers have thrown doubt and distrust on all Christian experience, and rendered appeals to it of little force against the unbelieving and the irreligious. In vain we tell unbelievers of their need of religion, of their nothingness without it, of the ineffable peace and repose they will experience in all the vicissitudes of this world, of the joy and gladness that will crown their

lives when once they become believers. "Have not Protestant ministers," say they, "told and promised us as much, and deceived us? Wherefore shall we believe you rather than them?" Having learned the illusory nature of all your ministers tell and promise them, they receive the alleged experience of Christians in all ages and nations, which on every principle of moral evidence, should be regarded as an argument of great weight, only with a smile of incredulity and pity. "Do not Protestants tell the same story, and tell it in the same words? Do they not parade their experience, speak of their inward joy and peace, of their raptures and ecstacies? These in their case are illusory; why not then in yours? They, we know from experience, both deceive and and are deceived, why not you?" Thus it is, men have trusted your ministers and been deceived, and now they refuse to trust even Almighty God himself. See you not the incalculable mischief your ministers have done, and what a terrible account they will have to render, if a day of reckoning ever comes? They have thrown so much false coin into circulation, that you forget that there can be no false coin if there is no genuine, and you refuse to believe that there is any coin circulating that is not false. They have induced you to adopt principles which in their development necessarily lead to the state of doubt and perplexity, in which you now find yourselves; they have deprived themselves of all power to relieve you; and they have by attempting to relieve you, only made it the more difficult for us to do it, or to recall you to faith and hope.

This much, my brethren, is certain, that your ministers, although they may not have intended it, have abused your confidence; they have deceived you, although they may have deceived themselves at the same time, and have in no instance kept their promise. Is it not so? For what was it that you consented to follow them? What was it they promised you? Was it to lose all Christian faith, to be thrown back on the imperfect light of nature, to be replunged into the darkness and corruption of heathenism, and reduced to the world of space and time, to mere earthly or sensible goods? Assuredly not. Your ministers told you that the church had lost her first love, that she had been unfaithful to her heavenly Sponse, that she had become corrupt, rotten, and no one could touch her without being defiled. They called her spiritual Babylon, the mother of harlots, and conjured you by your love of the truth and purity of the Gos-

pel to come out from her, to drink no more of the wine of her fornications, and to partake no longer of her sorceries. They promised you, if you abandoned her and listened to them that you should have pure Christianity restored, a church reformed and reconstructed after the primitive model, in which the pure word of God should be preached, and the pure ordinances of God's house should be kept and faithfully observed. They promised a revival of God's work among you, a renewal of his covenant with men; that the restored Gospel should have free course and be glorified, that all the ends of the earth should be converted, that all flesh should see the salvation of God and rejoice, and that you, the elect of Christ, should be of one mind and of one heart, steadfast and unalterable in your faith, simple and sincere in your external worship, and abounding always in the fruits of righteousness and peace. This is what the Reformers promised you; it is what your ministers have promised you; and it is for this that you have followed them.

Now tell me, my brethren, frankly and honestly, has this promise been kept? Three hundred years and more have passed away since the promise was made. Have you at any time possessed or do you now possess and enjoy a single one of these brilliant things for which you abandoned the church and followed the so-called reformation? You were promised a pure, holy and Evangelical church, can you tell me which of your thousand and one sects it is? You were promised the pure and unadulterated word of God, the primitive faith, "the faith once delivered to the Saints," can you tell me which of your thousand and one jarring and contradictory confessions it is? You were promised the pure ordinances of God's house, can you tell me what they are, who has authority to keep and administer them, what is their necessity, for what end they are instituted, or what is the principle of their efficacy?

I know, my brethren, that these may strike you as cruel questions, that it is in a spirit of mockery that I put them. You all know, and at times,—if I may judge at all from my own experience as a Protestant,—feel too deeply for words, that of all these brilliant promises not one has been kept, and not a few of you are now trying to persuade yourselves that not one of the fine things promised is necessary, or even desirable, and that it was only a popish error on the part of the Reformers to suppose the contrary. Despairing of any

thing better than the wretched state into which you have fallen, you try to believe that nothing better is to be had, and that nothing better was ever intended by the divine Author of Christianity. In your despair you say, Wrong, be thou my Right; Evil, be thou my Good. What can more clearly prove that you have been deceived, and that of all that was promised, you have realized nothing?

The great majority of those who sail under the flag of your ministers, or rally around their standard, whenever war is to be made on the old religion: have not only lost all faith but all conception of the Christian as a divinely revealed, constituted, and protected religion, and resolve it, some into a mere poetical, mythical, or symbolical representation, suited to the vulgar, of the great and invincible laws of nature, and some into the mere development of the religious sentiment inherent in man, and others as the answer which men themselves were able to give to the great problems of God, man, and nature, a true and good answer when given, but now outgrown and to be thrown aside as the garments of our childhood when we have become men-grown. Nowhere has your Evangelicalism remained unchanged, and nowhere does the inquirer find it to-day what it was yesterday, and everywhere is it felt that nothing fixed, uniform, and perfect is attained or attainable. The only thing in which you are all agreed is that Catholicity is false and hurtful, that truth, absolutely considered, is not and cannot be known, and that all religion resolves itself into the truism, Be good and do good, and—you will be good and do good.

In Germany, where Luther thundered with the true national German thunder his innovations, and Melancthon with a doubting or hesitating spirit, labored to polish and defend them, the pure Evangelicalism promised you has degenerated into pietism, mythism, rationalism, sentimentalism, or transcendentalism, and all those who seek to retain Christianity in the old Christian sense are every day retrograding towards the Catholic Church. In Geneva, the Rome of Protestantism, where Farel preached and Calvin legislated, Protestant Christianity has developed into a sort of baptized deism, too little Christian, I might almost say, to meet the approbation of a Rousseau or a Voltaire. In Holland and France, with insignificant exceptions, the Reformed churches have become unevangelical and rationalistic in fact, whatever they may be in name. In Norway, Sweden, and Denmark there are decided indications of a

revival of Odinism, or the old Scandinavian heathenism; in England and Scotland the older deism of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries is succeeded by a meagre spiritualism which is only a miserable humanism, and in this country, Protestantism tends to reject all dogmas, to make Christianity a mere scenic display, and to settle down in a revived necromancy and demon-worship. When some few years since your delegates met in a world's convention at London, to devise and effect a Protestant alliance for the overthrow of Catholicity, they found that there were no common doctrines on which they could agree, not even that of the immortality of the soul, and were obliged to separate without drawing up a common confession. A creed embracing only the principal articles of natural religion, never called in question even by heathen nations, was found to embrace too much to be accepted by all who claimed to be good Protestant Christians.

Indeed, my brethren, in vain would you deny that you have been most cruelly deceived. Your present condition bears no resemblance to that which was promised you, and in vain do you try to persuade yourselves that it is a good condition. You have spent your money for that which is not bread, and your labor for that which satisfieth not. You have consumed your portion of goods, which you took with you when you left your father's home, went into a far country, and set up for yourselves, and are now poor and destitute, although you may affect to say, "We are rich and want nothing." Your faith is only opinion, your hope is only desire, your charity is only philanthropy, and your zeal for God and heavenly things has turned into zeal for the world. You have no common doctrine, no common profession, no unity, no compactness; your doctrines, as far as doctrines you have, are vague and uncertain, proposed by no competent authority, believed without any sufficient reason, and vary from day to day, and from individual to individual. You are perplexed, and no longer know what to believe or what to do. Every day new reformers emerge from the chaos in which you lie weltering, and with bold words, fierce tones, and violent gestures, denounce your predecessors, for having stopped mid-way in the work of reform, and urge you on in the ever-beginning and never-ending career of new experiments. The van of yesterday is the rear of to-day. A novelty is hardly announced before it is obsolete. There is no inter-

val between the cradle and the grave. At every step your old ground gives way beneath your feet, and you are obliged to spring for your lives to some new ground which in its turn gives way as soon as gained. You have nothing solid on which to stand, you have no resting-place, no home, no fire-side, but like the Wandering Jew of the old romance are doomed to wander on, seeking repose and finding none, condemned to live, not that you may reap life's blessings, but endure life's curse.

It is true you call your variations progress, and console yourselves in your spiritual wanderings with the hope that, although you have not yet found, you are just agoing to find, the truth, to reach some place where you may repose, and refresh your wearied spirits. Vain hope! You are constantly moving but not towards the truth. You set out as reformers to restore Christianity, and called your work a reformation. Now you consider your mission to have been that of developing and perfecting Christianity, or at least of adapting it to the ideas, tastes, and wants of the modern world, and you regard your work a work not of restoration, but of progress. You have protested against the authority of the church, and won for yourselves, when the civil power does not interfere with you, the right to select, teach, and commission your teachers, that is, you have transferred the ecclesiastical authority as far as you retain it at all from the clergy to the laity, and made the flock the feeders of the pastors, and thus deprived yourselves of all divinely commissioned and assisted teachers, and this you call progress. A large number of you avowedly, and a still larger number of you unavowedly, deny the sacred mysteries of the Trinity and the Incarnation, make the Redeemer a mere creature, and thus deprive yourselves of all hope, except in an arm of flesh, and this also you call a progress. Another portion of you not only agree with these, but go further and deny as relics of ancient heathenism the turpitude of sin, the final judgment, and the everlasting punishment of the wicked, that is, all future retribution properly so-called, and assert that in the world to come the black and incorrigible sinner will fare as well as the saint, perhaps better, for he to whom most is forgiven will love the most, and this also you call a progress. The immense majority of your number hold that no particular belief is necessary, assert the indifferency of all religions, creeds, and confessions, and therefore of truth and error, of right and wrong, vice and virtue, and call it progress. It may be so; but it is man-

ifestly a progress by way of loss, not of gain,—a progress in which you get rid of more and more of what you and the world have hitherto believed, but not a progress in which you acquire something new to believe. It is a progress that cannot long be continued, without your losing every thing and being reduced to absolute indigence, and therefore a progress in which you depart further and further from the truth, instead of approaching nearer and nearer to it. Admitting to the fullest extent all the progress you claim, it only places you on a level with the old carnal Jews, who crucified their God between two thieves; for it is all simply progress in the material order, and consists in the increased facilities of producing and acquiring earthly goods, which tend only to draw the mind off from God and heaven, and to set the heart on an earthly instead of a heavenly paradise.

Turn the matter over as you will, make all the apologies in your power, and cling to every illusion that may dance before your eyes, the solemn truth remains undeniable, my brethren, that your ministers have cruelly deceived you, and their grand Protestant experiment has, as religion, proved a total failure. It has established nothing; it has unloosed every thing, and made all in religious belief or practice as variable and transitory as human passion or caprice. It makes nothing against this that some among you remain in the rear of others, or hold up your hands in pious horror at the audacity of the younger and more adventurous members of your party. These must, in spite of themselves, on with the rest. The most conservative among you are carried onward by the general movement of your body. There is no party among you that remains faithful to the teachings of Luther, or Zuinglius, or Calvin, or Cranmer, or Socinus. There is not one of your sects that does not depart even widely from the views of its founder; nay, as yet there has been no founder of a Protestant sect that has not departed more or less from the views and doctrines with which he set out. So general and so much in the ordinary course of things among you is this that you erect variation in doctrine into a principle, and boldly defend, under the name of progress, the founder of a sect in departing from himself, and his followers in departing from the formulas he sought to establish. Finding that you never have the truth to start with, and that you are to labor to discover it instead of laboring to obey it, you substitute inquiry after truth for faith; and finding

nothing among you fixed and permanent, you make it a reproach to our church that her doctrines are stationary, fixed, and invariable, and boldly maintain that it is a merit in you to have only the variable and the transitory.

No doubt many of you persuade or try to persuade yourselves that there is a radical difference between the so-called Evangelical Protestants and rationalists, transcendentalists, and humanists, that the former can be defended, and the latter condemned on Protestant principles. But with here and there an individual exception, and an exception so rare as almost always to excite a suspicion among you that he that forms it has a secret Romanizing tendency, you all count any apostate from us a Protestant gain, although like Ronge, the founder of the German Catholic sect, in leaving us he becomes a rationalist and humanist of the lowest sort. This shows the spirit of your body, and where your sympathies are. Moreover, all these non-Evangelical sects, as called by Evangelicals, tell you, and tell you truly, that they are faithful, if not to the doctrines of the Reformers, at least to the spirit and principles of the Reformation, that they only develop what was originally implied in that movement; and since that movement, whenever it has been free, or in proportion as the civil power has left it free, to develop itself, uniformly results in the doctrines and practices of these unevangelical sects, you cannot easily gainsay what they tell you. You are alike Protestants, and till you can agree among yourselves what is orthodox Protestantism, or agree on some competent authority to define it, we Catholics must regard all as Protestants who claim to be, and hold the Reformation responsible alike for all the sects into which its adherents may divide themselves.

I do not deny, I cheerfully grant, that many among you still profess to hold some Christian dogmas; but the Protestant body must be judged not by these, but by its fundamental principles, and its general tendency. Men are not Christian believers merely because they profess to hold certain Christian dogmas. The test of one's orthodoxy is not the fact of his professing to believe orthodox dogmas, but in the fact of his holding orthodox dogmas and for an orthodox reason. He who believes all the articles of the creed is no Christian believer if he believes them only as a philosophy. There are individuals among you who profess to believe nearly all Catholic doctrine, as one may say, the whole material object of Catholic faith,

and yet are they no Catholic believers, for they do not believe them for a Catholic reason. Their belief is a persuasion, an opinion, or a speculation, not faith. All Protestants, whether Evangelicals or non-Evangelicals, assert the same formal reason of belief, that is, private judgment, or, what is the same thing, the Scriptures interpreted by private judgment, that is, belief on mere human authority, and therefore, however they may differ among themselves as to the mere matters believed or not believed, are radically indistinguishable, and, as the rejectors of the Gospel all maintain the same formal reason for believing, there is no radical or generic distinction between Protestants and unbelievers themselves. This is the reason, my brethren, why your ministers have been able to establish nothing, and why you find yourselves everywhere constantly tending to rationalism and open infidelity.

Have you not, my brethren, observed that a striking change of late has come over the spirit and form of your internal controversies? In former times you had among you fierce and obstinate wars about dogmas; dogma armed itself against dogma, confession against confession. The consubstantialist and the sacramentarian stood front to front, and hurled each his anathema in the face of the other; the predestinarian sought to maintain his *decretum horribile* against the Arminian, and the Arminian his free will and unlimited grace against the unconditional election and reprobation of the predestinarian; the Trinitarian insisted on the dogma of the Trinity against the Socinian, and the Socinian on his contradictory dogma against the Trinitarian; the believer labored to defend revelation against the unbeliever, and the unbeliever to defend the sufficiency of reason against the believer. All that is now well-nigh changed among you, and you smile or you sigh over the folly of your ancestors who attached such vast importance to dogmatic Christianity. You congratulate yourselves that you have outgrown their childish controversies. Many of you sneer at dogmatic Christianity, and say, give us a religion for the heart, not for the head. A king of Prussia by royal edict unites Lutherans and Calvinists in the same communion, commanding them both to use the same liturgy, but permitting each to interpret it in his own sense, and few only of either body are found to object. Schleiermacher, the founder of the German school of supernaturalists, professes to accept all the symbolical books of the Lutherans, and

maintains in a grave discourse addressed to the cultivated among the despisers of religion that one may have all that is essential in doctrine and life without so much as believing even the personality of God or a future state of personal existence. Nearly all classes of your neologists accept the old Protestant dogmas, and only explain them; and Unitarians have been heard to sing the Nicene creed as a part of their religious service. Your philosophers no longer offer any direct opposition to faith; they make a boast of accepting all Christian dogmas. Nobody has ever held false dogmas; all religious doctrines it is maintained are true, only people, and especially those who have most strenuously advocated them, have not properly understood them. They all symbolize great truths, and we must seek to interpret them, not to reject them. Whence comes this remarkable change? What has brought your old internecine warfare to an end, and made you so remarkably tolerant of each other's errors? The cause, my brethren, is not, as you sometimes fancy, in the fact that you have grown more mild, and charitable, but in the fact that your leaders have discovered that it makes nothing in favor of their enemies that the matter of Christianity is accepted or rejected, so long as it is accepted or rejected for a human reason, or on a human authority, and therefore that all who reject an authoritative church, and acknowledge no authority, but private judgment, in religious belief are really members of one and the same family, and do not and cannot have among them any essential differences.

However, then, my brethren, you may seem on the surface to differ among yourselves, at bottom, whether Evangelicals, or non-Evangelicals, Puseyites or transcendentalists, you all belong to the same category, and are rightly all classed under one and the same general head. The only real differences among you are in degree, not in kind. Some have pushed the development of the principles common to you all, further than have others, and some are nearer the natural and logical termination of the Protestant movement than others, and therefore are the true index to what all are becoming, and must become, if left to the natural law of development. Those who are nearest the goal, have reduced Christianity to a mere philosophical and human system, and therefore you have all, as Protestants, virtually eliminated Christ from Christianity, and reduced Christianity to a mere hu-

man system, and by so doing reduced yourselves to the poverty and squalidness of nature.

The fact that some of you still assert that the Scriptures are authoritative does not in the least invalidate this conclusion; for you assert them as authoritative only as interpreted by private judgment, and cannot assert them as otherwise authoritative without departing from your Protestantism. The only authority the Scriptures can have to the mind is in their sense, and if that sense is determined by private judgment it is only the authority of private judgment. On your principles the Scriptures are not a judgment, are not proposed as a judgment, but as the subject matter of a judgment, on which by his private reason the individual forms a judgment, which judgment can, of course, have no more weight or authority than a private judgment formed by the individual on any other subject. As private judgment, as such, whatever the subject on which it is formed, or by whomsoever it is formed, is the equal of private judgment, it is perfectly indifferent what or whose private judgment is followed. Therefore all beliefs and no-beliefs are matters of indifference.

Here then, my brethren, is where all Protestantism logically leads, and where all genuine Protestants have, or sooner or later must, come. Nothing, then, is more certain than that on the principles of the Reformation it is impossible to maintain religion, and that just in proportion as you remain true to them and follow them out to their logical consequences you abandon all religion, and fall into unbelief and indifferentism. Without religion, my brethren, you are without law, without faith, without hope, and are reduced to this world alone, and therefore to mere sensible or material goods. But these goods, taken alone, are no goods at all, as your own experience and the experience of all ages amply prove. Then your Protestantism reduces you not only to absolute indifferentism, but to a state in which there is and can be no real good for you. Then, if Protestantism be true, there is no good for man.

The question now becomes, my brethren, a serious one, and one which should press home to your own interests and feelings. Is there no real, substantial good for man? Has some evil being made us? Has existence no purpose, life no rule? Is there no beatitude to which we may aspire? Is there nothing fixed, permanent, and that passes not as a shadow? Must we walk all our days in a vain show, and

leave no more trace of having lived, than leaves the bird that cleaves the air, or the keel that slits the wave? If so, our condition is most deplorable, and man with the rational soul, the thinking head, and the feeling heart is the most miserable of existences. Better to have been born a brute beast, better to have been a crawling worm, the insect of an hour, the veriest mote in the sunbeam than a man!

Do not deceive yourselves with the vain hope that your present wretched spiritual state is only transitional, only a necessary stage in your progress from what you are pleased to term the errors, the superstitions, and corruptions of Rome, to a pure and holy Christian church, or to a new and and more glorious development of Christian faith and piety. Three hundred years is too long a period for a transitional state to last, and is long enough to test any experiment, however great or important. I have already shown you that your present state is not accidental, produced by extrinsic and transient causes, but is the necessary and strictly logical development of the principles of the Reformation itself. You have nothing better on that side to hope. Your experiment, too, has been made under the most favorable circumstances. You have had every earthly advantage. You stepped in the very outset into the possession of the churches, schools, and hospitals founded by the piety, the zeal, and the charity of your Catholic ancestors; you have had wealth, learning, talent, and power on your side; you have been supported by kings and princes, with their fleets and armies, their constabulary, their courts, their prisons, and their hangman, and it is idle to expect hereafter to succeed where thus far you have failed. In a less time than you have had for your experiment, the early Christians had gone forth without one of your worldly advantages, poor and illiterate from that "upper room" in Jerusalem, and against all the powers of earth and hell had preached the Gospel to every nation and planted the cross in triumph on the capitol of the world. Had your cause been theirs, with all your advantages, you would have succeeded long ere this, and not be now excusing your failure by alleging that you are in a transitional state. An experiment that with every advantage for a fair trial has not succeeded in three hundred years has failed, definitively failed, and nothing more is to be hoped from it. You must take your Protestantism for what it has been and is, or not take it at all. Your experience proves that the more you develop it,

the further it carries you from religious faith and hope, and if frightened by the abyss of infidelity that opens under your feet you recoil and retrace your steps towards Christianity, you find no stopping-place short of Rome,—a return to the mother church.

Here then you are, my brethren, reduced by your Protestantism, which promised you so much, to the weakness and darkness of our fallen nature, to a state of doubt and perplexity, in which as you show by your daily conduct, you despair of all but the sensible goods of this world, in reality no goods at all. What will you do? The Reformers deceived you; your ministers have continued to deceive you; you have even deceived yourselves. You have now no alternative, but to remain where you are and beg of the swine you are doomed to feed a share of the husks they eat, or like the prodigal son to arise and return to your father's house,—the church of God,—where is bread enough and to spare. I am well aware of your deep and bitter prejudices against the church; I know that you can hardly endure to hear her named, that you hate and detest her, call her all manner of hard names, look upon her as your worst enemy, as sure to ruin you, soul and body, and are ready to cry out against her as the old carnal Jews did against our blessed Lord, when in their madness they exclaimed: "Crucify him, crucify him." But this much, whatever your pride, you must own to me, if not to me, at least to yourselves, that, as far as your knowledge extends, the church has never deceived you. She told you what would come of following the Reformers, and your own experience proves that what she told you was true. As your ministers have deceived you in regard to the Reformation, may they not also have deceived you in regard to the church?

This much is certain, my brethren, that your ministers, your philosophers, your poets, your politicians, your own minds and hearts have deceived you. All except the church has deceived you with lying promises and delusive dreams. This you know and feel in those moments when you venture to be honest with yourselves. Has the church ever deceived you? She told you the Reformers were deceiving themselves and their followers; she told you that your ministers were deceiving you, that the Lord had not sent them, yet they ran, that they were prophets prophesying from the delusions of their own hearts, that they gave

you chaff for wheat, their own words for the word of God, and that if you listened to them you would lose your Christian faith, and fall into absolute unbelief and irreligion. Did she lie to you? She told you from the beginning that all except herself were deceiving spirits, lying in wait to deceive you. Have her words proved untrue? Your ministers told you not to believe her, that she was an impudent prostitute, a vile sorceress, and her words were lies to entice you to enter into her secret chambers and share her foul embraces. They, you know, were deceivers in the promises they held out to you, and wherefore should you continue to trust them? If as far as you know she has never deceived you, has never with false promises lured you to evil, and never told you falsehood, why should you not conceive it possible, after all, that she is what she professes to be, the true church, the stainless bride of the Lamb, and that your ministers for purposes of their own have most foully belied her, most grossly calumniated her?

Do you allege that it is very unlikely that so large and apparently so respectable a body of people as Protestants should have committed so gross a mistake? I agree that at first sight it seems hardly credible. But then, if they have not been mistaken, Catholics have been, and we have the fact of their mistake to account for,—the equally gross mistake of a much larger and a no less respectable body, and that not for three hundred years only, but for eighteen hundred years. If you talk this way, the Catholic will carry it over you without an effort. And besides, St. Paul forewarned the faithful that the fact which seems to you incredible should actually take place. "Know also this, that in the last days, shall come on dangerous times. Men shall be lovers of themselves, covetous, haughty, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, ungrateful, wicked, without affection, without peace, slanderers, incontinent, unmerciful, without kindness, traitors, stubborn, puffed up, lovers of pleasure more than of God; *having an appearance, indeed, of piety*, but denying the power thereof. Now these avoid: for of this sort are they who creep into houses and lead captives silly women laden with sins, who are led away with divers desires, *ever learning and never attaining to the knowledge of the truth.* Now as Jannes and Mambres resisted Moses, so these also resist the truth; men corrupted, reprobate concerning the faith."—[2 Tim., iii, 1–8.] It does not answer to judge always from the appear-

ance, for they who break the unity of the faith and depart from the truth are under a sort of necessity of appearing outwardly to men as great lovers of truth, and scrupulously moral and pious, for it is only on that condition that they can sustain themselves or increase their numbers. They must be austere externally, for they cannot afford to be otherwise. But men may be externally very austere, and yet internally and in private not a little corrupt. Satan himself sometimes, and not unfrequently, disguises himself and appears as an angel of light. Men judge according to appearances, but God judges the heart.

Here then, my brethren, you are after three hundred years of experimenting with Protestantism. But here you cannot live. Nature is not sufficient for the life of nature, and it is not in man to be satisfied with mere earthly or sensible goods. Universal experience proves that we may possess all that the world can give, and still sigh and yearn for what we have not, and to be what we are not. Riches alone cannot enrich. Our views as to what it is to be rich expand with our acquisitions, and the distance between what we have and what we desire constantly widens in proportion as our possessions increase. On wishes wishes grow, and the more wishes we are able to satisfy the more we have springing up and clamoring in vain to be satisfied. The richer we grow, the poorer do we become, for poverty is always to be measured by the number of wants we have that we are unable to satisfy. Hence the wise in all ages admonish us if we would enrich a man to diminish his desires, not to enlarge his possessions.

Pleasures, again, do not please ; and none enjoy less than they whose sole study is to enjoy. Sensitive appetite and passion strengthen by indulgence, and in proportion as they strengthen the power to indulge them is impaired, and the capacity of their objects to gratify them is diminished. The votaries of pleasure are the most miserable of mortals. The philosophy of the Garden, however attractive and flowery may be its entrance, is the saddest philosophy ever invented and its disciples are the first to exclaim from the depths of their own experience, *Vanitas vanitatum, vanitas vanitatum, et omnia vanitas.* The pursuit of knowledge for its own sake, as much as some of you praise it, is little better. The eye is not satisfied by seeing, nor the understanding by knowing. It is but little at best that we can know, and the more we know the more are we oppressed by a sense of

what remains to us unknown, and unknowable. The chase after fame, wordly honors and distinctions is still more vain and fruitless. Nor do we find any thing more satisfactory in these idols of the age, love and philanthropy. Love, abandoned to nature alone, sought for its own sake, consumes itself in its own flames. It is capricious, morbid, a torment to its possessor, and an insurmountable obstacle to the love it demands in return. Philanthropy can only weep over evils it is impotent to cure, and aggravate the wrongs it would redress. It springs from nature, and can offer its objects at best, only sensible goods,—health, pleasure, knowledge, honors, fame, none of which ever slake the burning thirst or appease the gnawing hunger of their possessors.

The experience of all ages and all individuals proves that man never suffices for man, nor nature for nature. Man never does and never can obtain his good from the world. He has wants which transcend the universe, which demand an unbounded good, and which nothing created can satisfy. Why it is so, I will not stop now to enquire, but that it is so, is undeniable. The goods of this world, if ever goods at all, are goods only when they come unsought, when we do not desire them, and have turned our back upon them, in order to live for an end out of this world and above it. It may seem strange that we never find our good in the objects to to which our nature itself tends, and to which it all but irresistibly impels us, yet so it is, and we cannot make it otherwise.

Let me ask you then, my brethren, to pause and inquire if it is through necessity or merely through your own blindness or perversity that you find yourselves in a condition so sad and so desperate. Your ministers induced you to spurn the church and you find yourselves after three hundred years of experiment deprived of all real good, compelled to live and toil to no end. You are asking whence came we, why are we here, whither we go, and who will show us any good. The church claims to be able to answer these and all similar questions. She professes to explain our origin and destiny, and to furnish us a rule of life. She tells you that there is a good for you, a solid, a permanent, an infinite good within your reach; and that she, and she only, can direct you to it and enable you to possess it. She tells you that God made you not for this world and that he never intended you to find your good in these objects to which your nature in its present state inclines and impels you; but he

made you for a supernatural end, to seek and find your good in him, and in him only. She tells you that he alone can satisfy the soul, meet its deep wants, and fill it with peace and joy; that when we seek him in the way and by the means which he has himself ordained, we are spiritually restored to our normal state, live our normal life, and all things fall into their proper order, and work together for our good. Therefore in the words of her heavenly Spouse, she says, "seek first the Kingdom of God and his justice, and all these things shall be added unto you." She presents herself as commissioned by God himself, to direct you how to seek, how to find, and to enable you to seek and to find. She promises you in his name that, if you follow her directions, you shall live, your souls shall be filled, they shall overflow with joy, you shall eat the good things of the land, have in this world a hundred-fold, and in the world to come life everlasting.

Finally, my brethren, there may be danger to you in remaining away from the church. Certain it is, that, however hostile you may feel to the church, you cannot prove that she is not what she professes to be. As far as you have tested, or had any means of testing her words, you have found them in all respects *strictly* true. Never yet has she been convicted of falsehood. All she says then may turn out to be strictly and exactly true. But if so, what will be the condition of those who have scorned and rejected her, treated her as the Jews treated her Lord? If she be what she professes to be you have conducted towards her precisely as the carnal Jews conducted towards her divine Spouse, and have unwittingly verified his words: "If they have called the master of the house Beëlzebub, how much more them of his household?" I know the majority of you have little apprehension of what may come after death, and you look upon what the church says of the last judgment, and the eternal punishment of the wicked, as an old wife's fable, or as a mere bugbear to frighten the weak and timid; still you must own that what the church says may turn out to be true, and that, in spite of the jests and mockeries of the licentious and profane, who would fain persuade themselves with old Lucretius, that it is impossible for God to recall the dead to life, judgment and hell may prove to be no fiction, but awful verities. With all your boasted progress you have never been able to discover that it is not so, and if it be so, I may well

leave you to reflect what must be your condition, if you refuse to examine her claims.

The case, my brethren, then stands: with the church there is a chance of good, and without her there is no good for you, and may be severe condemnation and punishment for rejecting her. These I do not urge as sufficient reasons for embracing her, but they certainly are sufficient reasons for investigating her.

III.—OBLIGATION TO WORSHIP GOD.

I shall enter into no elaborate argument, my brethren, to prove to you that God is, and that atheism is untenable, because I do not judge it necessary, and because I wish to show all the respect in my power to your own understandings. I am not aware that any of you really doubt the existence of God, however atheistical may be some of your speculations, or erroneous your conceptions of the divine attributes. From the creation of the world or the beginning of time, even the invisible things of God, also his eternal power and divinity, have been clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made. Without God nothing can be conceived as existing, and to deny that he exists is to deny all existence. To deny the existence of all things is to deny all knowledge, for what is not or what does not exist cannot be an object of knowledge, and if we do not ourselves exist, and if we know nothing at all we cannot know that there is no God, and thus cannot assert atheism. We cannot, then, doubt that God is, and that we are under an obligation to worship him, an obligation from which we cannot withdraw ourselves, nor even he himself dispense us.

Is not this the common sense of mankind? In every age and nation, savage, barbarous, or civilized, do you not find the fact of our obligation to worship God acknowledged and asserted? Have not even those of your philosophers, who maintain that religion is a law or principle of human nature, universal, permanent, and indestructible, triumphantly proved, that religious worship, of some sort, is coeval and coextensive with the race? Assuredly, what is approved by all men, in all ages of the world, is a dictate of reason, and we cannot deny it without divesting ourselves of that which constitutes the peculiar dignity and glory of our nature, and, as far as in our power, placing ourselves out of the category of men, and in that of irrational beings.

Moreover, the obligation of all men to worship God is not only certain from the common sense of mankind, from what Immanuel Kant calls the practical reason, but it is a truth of the pure reason itself, and as demonstrably certain as any truth of philosophy or mathematics. Certainly, the creator has the sovereign right of property to the creature, —the maker, to the thing made. Is not this what you assert, when you say, a man has a right to the produce of his own hands, or the laborer is worthy of his hire? Is not God our creator? Has he not made us and bestowed upon us all our original endowments? You cannot deny it; for we could not act before we were, or bestow what we had not. Then he has the sovereign right of property to us; then we are his, not our own; and then we are bound to render ourselves, with all our original endowments, unto him, for justice requires us, as is undeniable, to render unto every one his own.

To render ourselves, that is, the tribute of our whole being, unto God as his due is, in general terms, what is to be understood by worshipping him. If, then, justice, as it undeniably does, requires us to render unto every one his due, and if we are due to God, are his and not our own, assuredly we are bound to worship him. This you cannot deny.

Can we ever withdraw ourselves from this obligation, or can it, by any act of ours, ever become true that we are not bound to worship God? Certainly not, unless we are able to destroy the relation which we hold to God as his creatures. We are bound to worship him because we are his; and we are his because he has made us. We are bound to render unto him the tribute of our being because he is its author, and of our whole being, because he is the author of the whole. So long, therefore, as it remains true that he has made us, and is the author of our being, and of our whole being, we must be bound to worship him. Can we ever make this untrue? Of course not, for it is metaphysically impossible.

But cannot God himself dispense us from this obligation? The obligation rests on the principle, that we are bound to render unto every one his dues, or what is his own, and is therefore founded in eternal justice. To release us from it would be to dispense with justice, and to authorize injustice. This God cannot do, because he is eternal Justice in itself, and it would be to deny, to contradict, to annihilate, in fact, his own essential, eternal, immutable, and indestructible nature, which is not supposable.

It follows, then, necessarily, that, however we may differ as to what is practically worshipping God, we are all under a moral obligation to worship him, from which we can by no act of ours withdraw ourselves, and from which not even he himself can dispense us.

This obligation to worship God, my brethren, is the ground of all our obligations, and cannot be denied without denying all morals. A moral action is not merely an action that it is agreeable, convenient, or useful to perform, but essentially a debt we owe, are bound in justice to pay, and cannot refuse to pay without becoming guilty of injustice. All morality rests on the principle of duty, and all duty on the principle of justice which commands us to render unto every one his own, or to give unto every one his due. If this principle binds at all, it binds us to worship God, for undeniably we cannot be less bound to give unto him his due than unto others their due.

But this obligation, if conceded, includes all our obligations, and aside from it we have and can have no obligation, as the wise man says, in saying: "Fear God and keep his commandments, for this is the whole of man," or as your version has it, "Fear God and keep his commandments, for this is the whole duty of man." We can owe only on condition that we are, to the extent of our indebtedness, not our own, and can owe only him whose we are. We owe God because we are his, and all we are and have, because all we are and have is his, since he is its author and giver. We cannot owe beyond all we are and have, that is, beyond our whole being, and if we owe the whole to God, it is clear that we can owe no one else. The earnings of property are the proprietor's. Since God owns our whole being, he owns all its faculties, and therefore all that we can acquire by their exercise. We are incompetent, as the son under age, to contract debts in our own name. What is due for services rendered to the son is due from the father, and what is due for services rendered by the son is due to the father. It is only in the father that the son can bind or be bound. So is it only in God that we can be bound or bind. Then we can owe others only for the reason that we owe him, and it is only for the reason that they owe him, that others can owe us. In either case the debt is a debt only because due to God, and must be paid to him, or, in commercial phrase, to his order. Clearly, then, our obligation to worship God is our only obligation, and in-

cludes in itself all our moral obligations, and therefore cannot be denied without denying all morality, which none of you, I presume, are prepared to do.

I am aware that moralists are accustomed to divide our duties into three classes,—duties to ourselves, duties to our neighbors, and duties to God, and that some persons suppose that each class stands on its own ground, independent each of the others, so that we might deny our duties to God, and still assert duties to ourselves or duties to our neighbor. But this is, as you perceive, a grave error. The division of our duties into the three classes just mentioned is convenient and perfectly proper, when the question is not as to the ultimate ground of duty, and it is only proposed to treat our specific duties simply in relation to their immediate objects; but when we are treating of the principle of duty itself, the ultimate ground of all obligation, it is not admissible; for then all duties resolve themselves into duties to God, and all particular obligations into the general obligation to worship God. There is and can be no atheistical morals. Without God there is no moral obligation; and supposing no duties to God, none can be supposed to our neighbor or to ourselves. A man who persuades himself that he does not believe in God may, indeed, perform many acts enjoined by the moral law, but not because so enjoined; for, if God is supposed not to be, no moral law is conceivable, because then there is no lawgiver.

The specific duties termed by ethical writers duties to ourselves are our duties. Certainly we are bound to take proper care of ourselves, and to do ourselves no harm. But to whom are we bound? You cannot say that we are bound to ourselves, for that would imply that the binder and the bound are one and the same. It would also imply that we are our own. We must be our own in order to be able to bind, and in so far as we are our own we cannot be bound. If we are our own, we do not owe ourselves, and then can be responsible to no one for what we do with ourselves, but are free to dispose of ourselves as we please. May I not do as I will with mine own? If we are our own whose business is it if we waste our strength and activity, destroy our mental and physical health, and kill both soul and body? But we are not our own; we belong to God whose we are and all we have or can acquire; and therefore are we bound, not to ourselves, which is absurd, but to him, to

take proper care of ourselves and to do ourselves no harm, because justice requires us by its very nature to take proper care of what is committed to us in trust, and to refrain from all injury to the property of another. Hence we are really bound to love ourselves, but for God's sake, not our own.

The duties described as duties to our neighbor are also real duties. We are bound to love our neighbor as ourselves, to refrain from doing him any injury in body or soul, and to seek his good as we have opportunity. But here, again, to whom are we bound? Not, as you will concede, to him, because he is no more his own, than we are our own, and not being his own he cannot bind us, or in his own right bring us in debt to him. The obligation we are under is not an obligation to him, but to God whose he is, and whose is all that he can have bestowed upon him. He being the property of God who is our owner as well as his, and being a man as well as we, and therefore our equal, we are bound to treat him as we are bound to treat ourselves; to love him as we love ourselves; for we must needs be as much bound to protect and to refrain from injuring the property of our Master in another as in ourselves. Hence the command, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself."

It is true, while we cannot assert duties either to ourselves or to our neighbor, unless we assert our obligation to worship God, we cannot worship God, if we refuse to love and serve our neighbor. The claim of God covers all we are and have, and extends to every sphere of our activity. He is, since he is our creator, the author of all our relations, whether relations of family or neighborhood, country or humanity; whatever is due in consequence of these relations is due to him, and therefore must be paid or we fail to discharge the debt we owe him. The special duties growing out of these several relations are not separable from the worship of God, but are integral in it, and in fact, even the principal part of it, and can no more be neglected without sin than any other part. He who would love God must love his brother also, and he who would worship God, must love and serve his neighbor. No man can be faithful Godward, and faithless manward.

But because our duty to God includes all our duties, you must not assume, with your modern humanists and socialists, that the worship of God is resolvable into the love and

service of humanity. The debt we owe, and all the debt we owe, is due to God, and to him alone. As owner of the debt, he may transfer it and make it payable to whom he pleases; but it must be paid to him, or to his order, or it is not paid at all. It may be, and in great part it certainly is, made payable to our neighbor, but it is so, only because God appoints him his agent to receive it. The error of your humanists and socialists is not in contending that it is our duty to love and serve our neighbor, nor in identifying the love and service of mankind with the love and service, or worship, of God; but in asserting the debt is due to our neighbor in his own right, and that we pay it to God because we pay it to man. Certainly we are to love and serve humanity, but not for its own sake, as these same humanists and socialists themselves virtually concede, for they attempt to prove that humanity is divine, and it is on the ground of its assumed divinity that they contend we are to love and serve it. We are to love and serve our neighbor for God, and when we do so, we worship God. But we cannot reverse it, and say we love and serve God for our neighbor, as do those who contend for the truth of Christianity on the ground of its social and civilizing benefits; for our neighbor, not being the owner of God, is not and cannot be the owner of the debt. The debt is not due to our neighbor, except as God appoints him to receive it, and to assert that it is due to him, is to deny that it is due to God, and therefore to pay it to him as his due is not to pay it to God at all. Hence the love and service of humanity for humanity's sake is not the worship of God, and becomes the worship of God, only when it is rendered for God's sake, and because authorized or commanded by him as our Sovereign.

Nor can you assume with your liberal Christians, as they call themselves, deists, as they are more properly called,—that though we are bound to worship God, we are not bound to render him any external worship. The worship of God exacted by eternal justice is the tribute of our whole being, of all we are and have. We are composed of body and soul, and are both external and internal, consequently we must be bound to render unto God both internal and external worship, the tribute of both soul and body.

That pride revolts at the assertion that we are bound to worship God, by rendering unto him the tribute of our

whole being, is no doubt very true; and that many of you will start at the assertion of universal subjection to God as if it were slavery, I can readily believe. But there is a wide difference between the absolute subjection to God, implied by our obligation to worship him, and slavery in any proper or offensive sense of the term. Slavery, you are aware, is not in subjection, but in *unjust* subjection. The slave is no more subjected to his master than is the wife during coverture to her husband, or the son while under age to his father, and, if equally just, the subjection would be no more a grievance in his case than in theirs. Absolute subjection to God is his due; it is therefore just, and consequently is no slavery, no grievance, no hardship; for it infringes no natural right or natural freedom of man, and deprives no one of any thing that ever was or ever could be his own.

Absolute subjection to justice you will concede, my brethren, is not slavery; for no man does or can pretend that he has the right to be unjust,—the right to do wrong. Rights are founded in justice, or they are not rights, but wrongs. The assertion of justice is the assertion of right; the denial of justice is the denial of right, and the denial of right is the denial of *rights;* for rights are rights only by participation of right, that is, of justice. The ground of all complaints is the real or supposed injustice of the matter complained of; and whatever men demand, they demand on the ground of its real or pretended justice. The highest conception men have or can have of liberty is absolute subjection to just authority, and perfect freedom from all arbitrary or unjust authority; and they account an authority tyrannical only because they hold it to be unjust, that is, unjust either in its origin or in its exactions. What is just all men feel that they are bound to give, and have the right to exact. Clearly, then, they all acknowledge, and must acknowledge, the absolute sovereignty of justice, and consequently their absolute moral subjection to it.

But justice regarded in itself is God, for God is not only just, but essentially justice in itself. Absolute subjection to justice is only another form of saying absolute subjection to God. All men, therefore, in conceding their absolute subjection to justice, do in reality concede their absolute subjection to God. They, then, only contradict themselves when they regard the former as liberty and the latter as slavery,—holding it good to be subjected to justice and evil to be subjected to God!

The repugnance so widely felt to the doctrine that we are bound to render unto God the tribute of our whole being, arises either from pride or hatred of justice, or from the supposition that God and justice are really distinguishable and even separable. But in either case it is indefensible. In the former case, it is a grave moral fault, and although a serious objection to the moral character of those who entertain it, is none to the doctrine itself. In the latter case it arises from a gross error. We cannot suppose God and justice in reality separable or even distinguishable, for that would be to suppose God without justice, and justice without God, neither of which is conceivable. Reason is declarative, not legislative,—declares the law, but does not make it. In teaching us that we are bound to give unto every one his due, it simply declares the precept of justice; it does not create it. Justice, then, must be prior to and independent of reason. As thus prior and independent, it must be either something or nothing. It cannot be nothing, for that would deny both reason and justice. It must be something, and then, since it is obviously supreme, universal, immutable, and eternal, it is God himself, who only is supreme, universal, immutable, and eternal. Then God is essentially just, or justice in itself, and to suppose him separated or even really distinguishable from justice would be to deny his being, which cannot be denied, for he is necessary being, and it is the property of necessary being that the contrary cannot be thought. Always and everywhere, then, you must suppose God, and then always and everywhere you must suppose him essentially just, or rather justice in itself. It would then be no less absurd than impious to suppose that in submitting to him, or in surrendering ourselves absolutely to him as our Lord and Master, we forego any natural right, or run the least conceivable risk of being oppressed. In so surrendering ourselves we return all that we can in justice call our own: we simply do our duty, and place our rights under the guaranty of infinite, eternal, and immutable justice.

Many among you, my brethren, I am aware, shrink from the doctrine of absolute subjection to God, or the obligation to render unto him the tribute of their whole being, as something wholly incompatible with human liberty or the natural rights of man, and will hardly be reassured by what I have just said. In these days when there is a universal clamor for liberty, the supposed incompatibility of subjec-

tion to God with human liberty is the greatest obstacle to faith and worship that is encountered. Men, whose minds and hearts are thoroughly imbued with the spirit of the age, imagine that in giving themselves to God they entirely lose themselves, and that, if they were to concede their obligation to render themselves unto him, they would surrender their freedom and independence. But, it requires little reflection to understand that no man has or can have independence in face of his Creator. We are all absolutely dependent on him for all we are and have, and in the very nature of things it must be so. God alone hath or can have real independence, and we are not God, and, notwithstanding the promise of the serpent to Eve in the garden, we cannot be God. We are creatures, and are therefore necessarily in the condition of creatures, that is, absolutely dependent on God for all things, for the very life we live, the very breath we breathe. To complain of this is to complain that we exist, that we have been created, for it is to complain that we are not God, but created beings, and created beings we must be, or not be at all. We have, then, no independence before God, and to surrender ourselves unreservedly to him as his due is only conforming morally to the unalterable truth of things.

Understand well, my brethren, that in thus surrendering yourselves to him, you surrender no rights. You have no rights except those which he himself gives you, none except such as are founded in his own eternal and immutable justice. How, in submitting yourselves to him, that is, by a moral act acknowledging yourselves absolutely subject to him in all things, can you endanger these rights? He has given us no rights, since he could not make us God, that are or can be held independently of him; always do we depend on him, not indeed on his mere will, distinctively considered, but on his eternal and immutable nature, for all the rights we have or can have. How, then, can refusing to acknowledge that we hold these rights from him increase their number or render them more secure? How can we lose them by morally surrendering ourselves to him who gives them, since we depend on him for them after such surrender no more than we do before, and have after as before his eternal and immutable nature as their guaranty?

Liberty is not, and cannot be, endangered by this surrender. Liberty is exemption from all subjection to unjust authority, and power to seek our true good, or the end to

which God has appointed us. It is not itself the good or the end, but a necessary condition of attaining to it. The end to which we are appointed is our good, and good is always something positive, substantial, not a mere negative of evil. As something positive, substantial, it is God himself. It consists in being, and not in not being, and only God hath being in himself. Nothing is or exists but God and his creatures, and his creatures exist only inasmuch as through his creative act they participate of his being. Creatures can attain to good only inasmuch as they participate of God. This participation in the case of rational beings is two-fold, physical and moral. The first we have by the very fact of our creation, and we do not seek it, because we already have it. The second is obtained by moral conformity to the divine law, and is the end to which we are appointed. It is not yet gained, but is set before us to be gained. Rendering ourselves voluntarily to God is only morally conforming to the absolute and essential conditions of all moral good. As what we want under the name of liberty is the freedom or power to do this, and as actually doing it cannot abridge our freedom or power to do it, the obligation to render ourselves wholly unto God can never be an infringement of our natural liberty.

I know very well that your philosophers have taught you to distrust all reasoning from final causes, and in the physical sciences where Bacon condemned it, I do not insist on it, yet in creation final causes are as essential as first causes. We can no more exist without a cause for which we are created, than without a cause which creates us. To deny that we are created for some end is to deny that we are created at all, and is either to assert with pride that we are God, or to deny with the sceptic that we exist. We assuredly are not God, and we must exist in order to be able to deny that we exist. We have then a final cause or ultimate end; this final cause or ultimate end is our supreme good, and the purpose of our existence is to possess or attain to it. The creature having only a participated good, cannot be our supreme good, that is, our final cause, any more than it can be our first cause. God is himself our last as he is our first cause;—he for whom we are created as well as he who creates us, as we have seen in the fact that we are his, not our own, and that we are bound to render unto him the tribute of our whole being. God then is himself both the supreme good itself, and our supreme good.

Bear in mind now, my brethren, that to worship God, or to render unto him the tribute of our whole being, is simply in all things to live for God as our final cause, that is, as the supreme good itself and as our supreme good. The obligation is therefore imposed by supreme goodness, and is a supremely good obligation, one for which we should be grateful, not one from which we should seek to withdraw ourselves. It is only an obligation to seek good instead of evil, and life instead of death. It forbids only evil, only death and destruction. Good can come only from God, for nothing real or positive can have any other origin; and it is only as we have our faces turned towards him, and as we tend to him, that we do or can tend to that which is either good in itself or good to us. If we turn our backs upon God and tend in a direction, so to speak, from him, we tend from all real being, from all life, towards the abyss of nothing, and necessarily find not good, not life, but absolute death, of both body and soul. In doing so, we show, also, the basest ingratitude, for we then say to God, at least by our actions, that we neither love nor honor him, that we do not thank him for having created us, endowed us with existence, given us life, and made us capable of receiving and enjoying unlimited good. We tell him evil is better than good, death better than life, non-existence better than existence, than which nothing is more absurd, false, or ungrateful. Let no one then look upon his obligation to worship God as incompatible with his good, for it is only by complying with it, that there is real life or real good for any one.

The foundation of the obligation to worship God is not indeed in the fact that to worship him is the necessary condition of attaining to our supreme good, for it might be asked, why we are morally bound to seek our own good. The obligation is founded in the relation in which we stand to God as his creatures, whom he has created for himself, and who, since he has created us, belong to him, and owe all we have, are, and can do, to him. That this obligation is just and good, and that compliance with it, so far from being injurious to us, is for our greatest possible good, is insisted on only to meet the repugnance proud and erring mortals feel to complying with it. We are to love and worship God for his own sake; but in loving and worshipping him for his own sake, we not only discharge our duty to him, but we find our own supreme good, attain

to the end for which we were intended, and the beatitude we now sigh and yearn for. To comply with the obligation is the way of life and bliss, and hence none can call compliance with it a hardship, or object to complying with it, unless they prefer death to life, and misery to beatitude.

Thus far it is certain, and undeniable, that God is, and is to be worshipped, and that it is only in worshipping him by rendering unto him the tribute of our whole being, that we can attain either to good itself or to our own good. This much I must be permitted to assume as established.

IV.—REASON SUFFICES NOT.

You will readily agree with me, my brethren, I presume, that it is not enough to know that we are under obligation to worship God, but that we must know also what it is to worship him. There is a wide difference between knowing that we ought to worship God, and knowing what is the worship he exacts. Nor is it enough to know in a general way that to worship God is to render unto him the tribute of our whole being, or the sincere homage of all our faculties. Knowledge, to be of any practical value must be knowledge of the particular as well as of the general, for all practice consists in particular acts.

To worship implies an act, and an act which we ourselves perform. It is to do something, and in every thought, word, and deed, that particular something which God commands, and because he commands it. The act, whatever it be, must be a voluntary act, or it will not be our act; and it must be done because God commands it, or it will not be an act of worship. No act is done voluntarily that is not done with intellectual apprehension of its object. The will, which is the executive force of the soul, is in itself a blind faculty, and can operate only as enlightened by the intellect. Hence no act is an act of worship unless done with the knowledge of the fact that God commands it to be done. Involuntary ignorance may excuse other acts from sin, but no others can be acts of worship. Hence in order to be able to fulfil the obligation to worship God, we must be able to know the particular acts which are its fulfilment. Are we able by natural reason alone to know what are these acts?

This is no question as to the veracity of reason, where she speaks, but is simply a question as to her sufficiency. Reason may be sufficient within certain limits and in rela-

tion to certain matters, and yet not be everywhere sufficient and in relation to all matters. She may suffice to tell us that we are bound always to do right, and yet not be able to tell us in all cases what is right. Her light is true light when it really shines, but it does not illumine all reality. We stand everywhere confronted with the Unknown, and over all that is known is the shadow of that which we know not, and which with our natural powers we cannot know. Reason asks more questions than she answers, and few of you will go so far as to claim for man the divine attribute of omniscience. Reason, in fact, declares her own limitations; and to confide in her where she says she does not and cannot know is no less to assert her veracity than is to confide in her where she declares she can and does know.

Nor, again, is there now any question as to the sufficiency of reason to prescribe the worship satisfactory to the Christian believer. A supernatural revelation, when given and authenticated, is unquestionably the criterion of reason, to which it must conform on pain of being unreason; but no one can ask reason itself to prescribe a worship which can be only supernaturally prescribed. The question does not ask if reason be sufficient for the supernatural order, or to give of itself all that they who have a supernatural revelation know does and must in the present providence pertain to the worship of God. If reason is sufficient within the order of nature, she is sufficient as reason, and must be presumed to be absolutely sufficient, unless God himself informs us by a supernatural revelation to the contrary. The question simply asks, Is reason sufficient in the order of nature? Is she sufficient for herself, or able to prescribe a worship with which she herself as reason is satisfied?

This you will perceive, my brethren, is a question of fact, not of speculation, and is to be settled by an appeal to experience, not to *a priori* reasoning. The power to know is innate, but knowledge results from the exercise of that power, and therefore comes from experience. Not indeed from experience in the narrow sense of some of your philosophers, who improperly restrict it to the perception of sensible objects. There is a sensible world; but there is also a supersensible, an intelligible world, as truly an object of knowledge as the sensible world itself, and even more so, for it is only by knowledge of the intelligible that we ever know the sensible; yet distinct and available knowledge of either or of both is alike experience. We ascertain

our faculties and their reach by their operations, and can claim no faculty or power which we have not thus ascertained, that is to say, of which we have had no experience. The question, then, resolves itself into this: Has reason in her operations and developments ever proved herself able to prescribe a practical worship, or a specific religion, satisfactory to reason?

The Christian religion is perfectly satisfactory to reason, but that religion must, for the present, be left out of the account, because you are supposed not to concede it, and because the unbeliever, as well as we, denies that reason has prescribed it. If I am not at liberty to assume it in order to prove the insufficiency, you of course are not at liberty to assume it in order to prove the sufficiency of reason. Leaving Christianity aside, it is a well-known fact that men by the mere light of reason have never in a single instance succeeded in establishing, or even in maintaining, a religion satisfactory to natural reason, complete in her own eyes, and in which she finds nothing to condemn. All the religions of the gentile world, ancient or modern, stand convicted of gross error, immorality, and absurdity, at the bar of reason as well as at the bar of Christian revelation. Ancient nations the most renowned, powerful, cultivated, and refined, practised religions from which reason recoils with horror. I am almost afraid to refer you to the immortal gods, to their impure mysteries, and the ceremonies observed in their worship. "Their amours, cruelties, jealousies, and other excesses were the subjects of festivals and sacrifices, of hymns sung in their honor, and of pictures consecrated in their temples. Crime was adored, and regarded as an essential part of their worship. Plato, the greatest of philosophers, justifies drunkenness at the feasts of Bacchus in honor of the god, and Aristotle, although he censures severely indecent pictures, excepts those of the gods, who, he says, wish to be honored by such infamies. It is impossible to read without astonishment the honors which it was held necessary to pay to Venus, and the prostitutions consecrated to her worship. Greece, all polished as she was, received these abominable mysteries. Individuals and cities in the pressure of affairs vowed harlots to Venus, and Greece herself did not blush to ascribe her salvation to their prayers to their goddess. After the defeat of Xerxes and his formidable host, a tablet was placed in her temple, on which were represented their vows

and processions, with this inscription from the famous poet Simonides: 'These prayed to their goddess, who for love of them saved Greece.'"*

Nor to Greece alone were these abominations confined. "Roman gravity treated religion with equal levity. It consecrated to the honor of the gods the impurities of the theatre and the bloody spectacles of the gladiators, that is to say, all that can be conceived that is most corrupt and barbarous."† At Babylon every woman was required on the feasts of Venus to prostitute herself to the first comer; at Carthage, in Phœnicia and Lydia, marriageable virgins were sent on the feasts of Ashtaroth with solemn religious ceremonies, to the "Tents of the gods," to obtain by the sale of their chastity their marriage dower. It needs not to speak of the lascivious dances in honor of the gods universal among all the ancient gentiles, the impurities of the worship of Venus in Cyprus and at Corinth, or of the Phallus—the Lingam of modern India—in Egypt, Syria, Greece, or Rome, the orgies of Bacchus, or the abominations of Isis. It is enough to say, what it were but too easy to prove by the most ample details, that in all the gentile nations of antiquity, after the dispersion of mankind, as related in the Mosaic history, the gods were worshipped by the sacrifice of reason, chastity, decency, and humanity; and among them all there was not one that did not seek at times to appease the wrath, or to propitiate the favor, of their divinities by immolating human victims upon their altars.

These vices and crimes, these cruelties and abominations were not mere excesses forbidden by the public religion and breaking out in spite of it. They were warranted by the example of the gods; they were an integral portion of their worship, erected into sacred rites, and prescribed by the recognized religious authorities. I will not so far dishonor reason and insult your understandings as to suppose even for a moment that it can be necessary to prove that reason never was and never could be satisfied with any of the ancient mythological or idolatrous religions. Undoubtedly we may detect, as underlying these ancient and abominable superstitions, some principles and reminiscences of truth, which reason does and must approve. We see in them the recognition of the truth that we are bound to

*Bossuet. *Discours sur l' Histoire Universelle.*—P. II., ch. xvi.
†Ibid.

worship God, and to hold nothing too dear or precious to be consecrated to his service. It is no doubt in a misapplication of the principle that we owe all to the Divinity, and that what we hold dearest and most precious will be the most acceptable offering to God, that has originated the licentious and cruel rites that were practised, and on this principle may be explained the sacrifice of their chastity by women, and of their children by parents. The principle is sound, but the application false, shocking, and abominable; and it is precisely in the application of principles that reason fails. She does not fail as to the principles themselves, and I am not aware of a single false principle adopted by heathen antiquity; but she fails in the reduction of principles to practice, or in determining what is their practical realization in the intellectual no less than in the moral order. She approves the principles, but turns away in horror and disgust from her own application of them, and without being able to determine what other application should be made of them.

Reason sees, or rather, we by natural reason see, clearly enough that in these ancient superstitions God was not worshipped, and that if he had been the object worshipped, the worship offered was such as he could not have accepted. We know by the simple light of reason that the elements, sun and moon and stars, wood and stone, silver and gold, lizards and crocodiles, fishes of the sea and fowls of the air, four-footed beasts and creeping things, men and women, whether living or dead, works of men's hands or creatures of the imagination, are not God, are not the Supreme Being, who has made heaven and earth and all things therein, and whose existence and attributes are clearly seen and known from the beginning. Reason knows that all these pretended religions were idolatries, and idolatry in any shape or degree she does and must condemn; for, as you have seen, she easily and conclusively demonstrates that we are bound to worship God, and him alone,—that is, to render unto him, as his due, the tribute of our whole being. When we give ourselves up to idols, to any thing, real or imaginary, other than God himself, we fail to render him his due. Yet the religion of every nation confessedly abandoned to the light of natural reason is only an abominable idolatry. How then can it be pretended that natural reason is sufficient to prescribe a religion satisfactory to herself?

Even if the pagan worship were offered to God as its object, reason is fully competent to say that he could not accept it, for she knows that he is just and pure, and that these filthy rites, impure ceremonies, and shocking cruelties can only offend him, can only be, in the language of a Hebrew prophet, a "stench in his nostrils." So evident is it to reason that these are not an acceptable worship to God, that many of the heathen poets and philosophers themselves inveighed against them, and in Greece and Rome, and perhaps in other nations, the more cultivated classes came at length to despise them, fell into mere rationalism, or irreligion, and only occasionally conformed to them in public for social or political reasons, as is the case with not a few of your own number, my brethren, in regard to the sects to which you nominally belong.

The insufficiency of natural reason to prescribe a reasonable worship may be collected from the conduct of those, who, in our times, claim to have outgrown the Christian religion, and profess to take the simple light of nature for their guide. These are quite numerous, and to hear them, they are the more enlightened men and women of modern times. But, though the light of nature has shined for six thousand years, it does not appear to have guided them to any thing which even they are willing to regard as true religion. They are very far from being agreed as to what it is nature teaches, and they split into sects and varieties innumerable. Scarcely any two of them can agree as to a single positive doctrine. Nowhere, although nature, and according to them, nothing but nature, has been at work from the beginning, do they find a satisfactory religion already made to their hands. They are unable to content themselves with Greek and Roman polytheism, or even with African fetichism. The religions of Egypt, Syria, Phœnicia, Chaldea, Persia, Greece, Rome, Gaul, Scandinavia, and Germany, India, China, Mexico, Peru, Timbuctoo, Guinea, and Caffreland, alike fail to meet their wants; and whatever their secret affection for the Cyprian goddess, or partiality for the Bacchic orgies, they seem by no means prepared to rehabilitate the worship of Jupiter, Juno, Pallas, Baal, Ashtaroth, Apis, Kneph, Vishnu, Schiven, Buddha, Woden, Thor, Freya, Viztli-Puztli, Manitou, or even Mumbo-Jumbo. The deism of Herbert of Cherbury, as the Theophilanthropy of Reveillière-Lepaux, has no prototpye among the religions of mankind, and utterly

fails to command the suffrages of the great mass of those who, leaving the church, make it their boast that they follow reason. This is all unaccountable if reason is sufficient to institute a religion satisfactory to reason.

Modern eclectics, it is true, assert the sufficiency of reason and the infallibility of the human soul. They patronize, to a certain extent, all religions, ancient and modern, and hold that each symbolizes a great truth; but they confess that the religion satisfactory to reason has never yet had a concrete existence. Such a religion remains to be instituted. It may, they allege, be obtained by resolving all past and present religions into their original elements, and selecting from each the portion of truth it conceals, and moulding the separate truths, thus collected, into a new, complete, and harmonious whole. But this avails them nothing: for this new religion, in its satisfactory form, has no historical existence, and the task of forming it from the old religions is no less difficult than original invention. Moreover, the eclectics are far from being agreed as to what elements to take and what to leave. They tell you also, that however successfully they may accomplish their task, it will be only for a brief moment. The new religion will no sooner be organized than it will be found too small for humanity, become a galling chain to the free soul, and a barrier to further progress. They confess that reason will disown their work as soon as they have done it, and begin forthwith to undo it. Alas! what satisfied reason yesterday will not satisfy it to-day, far less to-morrow. The truest and holiest forms of faith and worship are as short-lived as the summer flower, as transient as the morning dew. All things change their forms, and nothing remains but the abstract obligation to be good and do good; while the answer to the question, What is it to be good and do good? varies ever from one age of the world to another, from nation to nation, and even from individual to individual. What is all this, granting all that is claimed, but an unequivocal confession of reason's inability to suffice for reason?

Indeed, the more prudent and philosophical of the recent rejecters of supernatural revelation seek to make out their case by claiming Christianity herself as a product of natural reason. They even censure those who openly array themselves against her, call themselves her especial friends, and profess to be more Christian than Christians themselves;

they patronize our blessed Lord, lavish on him their caresses, and enroll him as one of their company. All this has a fair seeming, but it avails them nothing; since, unhappily for them, Christianity has always professed, and has always been held, to be a supernatural religion. If they embrace her as such, they condemn themselves; if they deny her to be such, they condemn her,—for she has then made a false profession, and reason can tolerate no false profession,—approve no religion which is not what it professes to be. Christianity, if conceded to be sufficient to satisfy the demands of reason, can be an argument for the sufficiency of reason only when taken in her historical character, as she has been hitherto received, and in the sense in which she claims to be accepted; but, if so taken, she is a plain, unequivocal denial, on divine authority, of the sufficiency of reason. This the gentlemen referred to appear to understand, and hence we find them modifying Christianity in all directions, and seeking to give her a sense essentially different from that in which she has hitherto been received by both friends and enemies,—a sense which they, indeed, say is the one in which she ought to have been taken, but in which they must confess she has not been. But so taken, she ceases to be the Christianity of history, and becomes, as some of them expressly call her, a new Christianity, and therefore unable to afford any argument from experience in favor of the sufficiency of reason to prescribe the worship of God; for experience has not yet demonstrated that in this new sense Christianity is able to meet all the demands of reason.

If a man, my brethren, were to start in pursuit of a religion outside of the Christian church, satisfactory to reason, where could he find it? Not with any of the ancient or modern pagan mythologies, it is certain. Not with any of the forms of dogmatic Protestantism, it is equally certain; for they all arraign one another, and there is not one of them that is not either too much or too little for reason, that reason does not convict of inconsistency in being so much and no more, or so little and no less. Not with Mahometanism assuredly, for reason is offended with its sensual paradise, and above all with its absolute fatalism, which denies free will, and with it all moral obligation, and therefore the very obligation itself to worship God. Can he find it with any of the ancient philosophers? Which of them? With Socrates, reputed the wisest of them all?

Can reason approve the *Socratic love*, that sin against nature, which brought down destruction upon "the cities of the plain," and which Socrates in Plato not obscurely avows, and apparently defends? Can it approve the order to sacrifice a cock to Æsculapius, which he gave just before his death to his disciple Crito? Did he hold Æsculapius to be a god, and the cock to be his due? Then he was an idolater. Did he not so hold? Then he was a base hypocrite, or a miserable conformist to popular superstition. Will he find it with the "divine Plato" who denied marriage, asserted the lawfulness of fornication, and maintained that every one should conform to the religion of the state under which he is born, however false, gross, filthy, or abominable? Moreover, he is a pantheist and apparently a polytheist. Does reason approve these doctrines? Will he find it with Cicero, the only philosopher of the Romans? Cicero was a great orator, a great and a pleasing writer, but he held a philosophy of doubt, that fame or glory is the true end of life, and that it is lawful not only to be a minister of an idolatrous religion, but to conform outwardly to a gross popular superstition while inwardly despising it. Surely reason cannot reconcile this with true religion, or even ordinary morality.

Suppose the inquirer comes down to the philosophers of modern times, with which of your modern philosophers will he find it? With Bacon? He discoursed on the method of philosophizing, but he gave no philosophy. With Hobbes? He was an atheist. With Locke? In philosophy proper he copied, for the most part Hobbes, and besides, he is obsolete. With Hume? He was a professed sceptic. With Reid and Stewart? They are forgotten, and though they made an honorable protest against the false ideology of Locke, and the scepticism of Hume, they did not themselves enter even the vestibule of philosophy. With Kant, Schelling, Hegel, Cousin? They have already dwindled into insignificance, and their systems, if pushed to their last consequences, leave no God to adore. With the Scandinavian prophet, the founder of the New Church, the famous Swedenborg? What! with one who makes God *essential* man, and whose system confounds God and man, the natural and supernatural, and finds its strongest evidence in Mesmerism? With Saint-Simon, the Parisian count, debauchee, beggar, would-be self-murderer, and inventor of New Christianity? Alas! his disciples were never able to

agree as to what he taught; and they have separated and disappeared. With Charles Fourier? What! with one whose god is Mammon, whose rule of life is inclination, not duty, passion, not reason, and who places worship in selfish indulgence?

Alas! the poor man, like Noah's dove let loose from the ark, before the waters were dried up, would find no resting-place for the sole of his foot. He would be obliged either to reject all religion, or to attempt, with Chevalier Bunsen, to construct "the Church of the Future," either to have no religion, or to fabricate one for himself. To this conclusion come all your philosophers, and hence you everywhere see them either plunging into absolute irreligion, or heaving at the bellows and hammering at the anvil, in the vain endeavor to forge out a religion for themselves,—and throwing away their work in disgust, as soon as completed.

Certain it is, my brethren, that reason has never yet succeeded in prescribing a worship which meets her own demands. Equally certain is it, if she has not done it, that she cannot do it. It is idle to expect her to do what she has never been able to do. She is no new power, no recent gift or acquisition. She is a natural endowment, and as old as mankind. Men possessed her in the beginning, and have had from the first all the reason that belongs to human nature. The heathen nations fell into their gross superstitions not prior to receiving the gift of reason, but afterwards; and they practised those abominations, which it is a shame even to name, with all the light of reason, and all the protection to truth, justice, and purity which she affords. If she is sufficient, whence those foul and abominable superstitions? If, notwithstanding all she does or gives, men, whenever abandoned to her alone, invariably fall into them, how can you say that she suffices to prescribe the worship of God?

It will not do to say that reason has not had fair play; that she has been impeded in her operations, and has never been able to put forth her whole strength. She has had six thousand years for her experiment; and she has found no impediments but such as grow out of human nature, and therefore such as she must always and everywhere find. No doubt, appetite and passion, the workings of concupiscence, have prevented her from doing as well as otherwise she might have done; but this is a proof of her insufficiency, not her apology. No doubt, these have often

dimmed her vision and stifled her voice; but this was one of the contingencies to be provided for, one of the practical obstacles to be surmounted. No doubt, she saw clearly enough that the superstitions and abominations into which these dragged individuals and nations were not the worship of God; no doubt, she protested against them; but what availed it, as long as she had no executive force either to prevent or to arrest them? What availed it, that she knew what was *not* the worship of God, if she knew not what was his worship; or if in some degree knowing it, she could not assert it with sufficient distinctness, energy, and authority, to make herself heard and obeyed? If she had sufficiently known and asserted it, the nations could not have fallen into their abominable superstitions; and the fact that they have so fallen is a proof that she did not and could not sufficiently know and assert it. If she could not in the past, she cannot now or ever hereafter; for her natural strength is always the same, and so are the obstacles presented by human nature for her to overcome; since human nature does not change, and could not change and remain human nature.

Nor is this conclusion to be set aside by any of your modern theories of progress. No progress of nature can be asserted, and progress by natural causes in relation to reason is contradicted by all experience. In Christian nations, where the influence of Christianity has been felt, there may have been progress; but these nations, in a question as to the sufficiency of reason, are not to be taken into the account; for it remains to be proved that their progress has been the result of natural causes. Our observations must be restricted to nations confessedly abandoned to the light of nature, and from them alone we must collect, if at all, the facts which are to warrant the induction of natural progress; otherwise we shall fall into the sophism of assuming what is in question. The conclusion obtained can be set aside only by establishing in the history of these nations the fact of progress, and of progress in the knowledge and worship of God. Simple material progress effected by industry or force of arms, or scientific and artistic progress effected by reason in the service of appetite or passion, is nothing to the purpose; for such progress does not necessarily imply any progress in the knowledge and discharge of our duty. If in these nations we find a gradual moral improvement, if we find them, as time flows on, ameliorating

their manners, attaining to less and less unworthy conceptions of God, abandoning their idols, and purifying their worship of its abominations, we may regard it as a presumptive proof of its progress by natural causes; but if we find nothing of all this, if we find the nations sinking deeper and deeper in moral corruption, and adopting grosser and grosser superstitions, we must conclude, with all the certainty of experience and of fact, against natural progress.

It is historically certain that no progress of the kind needed by the argument can be traced in the history of a single nation, ancient or modern, confessedly abandoned to the simple light of nature. Under the moral and religious point of view, the progress of all heathen nations is a progress in corruption. The period of their history least offensive to reason is invariably the earliest. There may have been degrees of error and abomination in the heathen superstitions, and the less degraded and debased may have done something, for a time, for the relative elevation of those who embraced the more corrupt. I am not certain but the Macedonian Greeks by their Oriental conquests did something for the moral amelioration, for a short time, of Syria, Chaldea, Assyria, Egypt, and Lybia, and the Romans for that of Spain, Gaul, and the British Isles, and therefore that the Græco-Roman conquests and colonizations did not upon the whole check for a time the downward progress of superstition; nor am I certain that they did not in reality have the opposite effect, by adding to the peculiar Greek and Roman superstitions the worst forms of superstition practised by the conquered nations. This last was certainly the case in Rome under the pagan emperors, which became the Pantheon, or temple of all the heathen gods, and the sink of all iniquity. But be this as it may, it is certain that no heathen nation ever by its own indigenous efforts ameliorated its manners, morals, or religion, and that, in every one left to itself, its abominations invariably grew with its growth, and were at their highest when it had reached the culminating point of its external greatness and glory.

Never in a single heathen nation do we find reason gradually developing itself and recovering its empire, but always becoming darker and darker, and less and less able to withstand the tide of error and corruption, that continues to rise higher and higher till it overflows the whole land and extinguishes the national life. The renowned nations of antiquity gave no sign of progress, and they have all passed

away. Egypt, Assyria, Persia, Phœnicia, Carthage, pagan Greece and Rome are extant only in their mouldering ruins. Thebes, the hundred-gated city, lies buried in her own catacombs; Tyre sits desolate on her island, and the rude fisherman dries his nets where her "merchant princes" were wont to congregate. The owl calls to his fellow in the solitude of Babylon; the rank grass grows in the once thronged mart, and silence has succeeded to the hum of industry. These have all expired in their own corruption, and of their own rottenness, and, who of you, my brethren, cannot read in their doom the impotence of natural reason alone, and the falsity of the modern theories of progress?

Nowhere, except in Christian countries do we see any signs of progress, or detect any indications of a recuperative energy. History records no instance of spontaneous civilization. Ages on ages roll over the savages of Asia, Africa, and America, and bring no change for the better. The traveller to-day east from the Persian Gulf, along the coasts of the Indian Ocean finds the savage tribes that inhabit them precisely what they were found by the companions of Alexander, the Macedonian conqueror. The glory of Persia and Arabia is in their dim and fading recollections,—of India in a remote and unchronicled past, in which all her monuments attest she possessed a religion far less impure and debasing than her present abominable superstitions. The vast populations of China and Japan, the last of the gentiles to desert the patriarchal religion, have lapsed like the others into idolatry, and sink, each generation into a lower deep of ignorance and infamy. The Turkish hordes, have shown no signs of improvement during the five hundred years they have been encamped in Europe, and Moslem life is everywhere flickering and ready to expire in its socket. The natives of this continent, when discovered by Europeans, which approached nearest to civilized life, as Mexico and Peru, were the most corrupt, and precisely those whose religious practices were the most revolting to reason and humanity.

Indeed, the philosophers of the progressist school are themselves so well satisfied that heathen nations afford no example of the progress they contend for, that they appeal exclusively to Christian nations for the facts on which they attempt to build their theory. They assume, without proof and against evidence, that mankind began in mere instinct, and that the first form of religion it attained to on the

dawn of reason was fetichism, or the gross superstition that worships wood and stone and animals. According to them the several stages of religious progress are fetichism; polytheism; monotheism or Christianity. But history shows us mankind not ending, but beginning in the worship of one God, and introduces to us the worship of God long prior to idolatry, whether in the form of African fetichism, or the more polished forms of Græco-Roman polytheism. The worship of God as practised by Christians to-day is historically the primitive religion, and instead of being a development of heathen superstitions, has, if we are to credit history, manifestly preceded them, and they instead of being its undeveloped germs are its corruption, and whatever they contain not incompatible with it has been derived by tradition from it. This is what a sound philosopher would naturally suspect, for truth is older than falsehood, and therefore religion must be older than superstition which is simply a perversion or corruption of religion, as error is of truth.

The heathen philosophers themselves, who, from time to time inveighed against popular superstitions, and whose doctrines are sometimes appealed to as evidences of the progressiveness of heathenism, profess always to speak from the wisdom of the ancients, and claim to be simply recalling their contemporaries to the worship observed by their ancestors in an antiquity more or less remote. So far as they are found recognizing the unity of God, they never assert it as a new doctrine, as a recent discovery, but as an ancient doctrine, which had been lost sight of and forgotten in the corruptions of later ages. Indeed the reminiscence of the divine unity may be detected in all heathen religions, and the tradition of one supreme God older than all the gods of Olympus, seems to be always present to remind the idolatrous crowd of a pure and primitive worship observed by their remote ancestors, and endearing them to the Divinity. All heathen worship seems penetrated by a conscious regret, the secret feeling that something true, pure, and noble, has been lost, and that what they have is but a miserable substitute supplied by despair. Amid all its pomp and gaiety, its joyous hymns and smoking incense, it is sad and despairing, and the worshipper seems dejected and forlorn, as Homer's ghosts in the land of shades.

The heathen philosophers themselves, undoubtedly, had some just conceptions of the Supreme Being; but they

cannot be appealed to in favor of progress, because they professed to derive these conceptions from the ancients; because they had, most of them at least, travelled in Egypt, Syria, or Phœnicia, and might have learned, and not improbably did learn, much from the Jewish people, who, during all the darkness of heathendom, had preserved the worship of the true God; and because they changed nothing in the manners or morals of their countrymen. With scarcely an exception, they, while despising, conformed, and recommended their disciples to conform, to the superstitions of the vulgar. Never did Greece and Rome decline more rapidly in virtue than under and after the teaching of their renowned philosophers; never was the heathen world generally, so far as it had not fallen into absolute irreligion, sunk in grosser immoralities, or in more abominable superstitions, than at the advent of our blessed Lord; and never, to human judgment, was it less prepared for the Gospel, than when the Fisherman of Galilee transferred the seat of Christian empire from Antioch to Rome. Preparation there certainly was, but not from the gentiles themselves. It was in the providential settlement and influence of the Jews in the chief places of the Roman Empire, who, when the heralds of the cross went forth from Jerusalem, formed in each the nucleus of a Christian congregation, as do the Irish now in every part of the Protestant world in which the English is the mother tongue of its rulers.

All this belies the hypothesis that Christianity is a natural development. If it had been, you would see in the heathen nations themselves a gradual approximation to its faith and worship. Some might have reached it sooner than others, but all would have been looking and advancing towards it. But you see nothing of all this, and you know from history that Christianity encountered violent opposition on its first promulgation, and that it did not fully extirpate paganism from the Roman Empire till after an obstinate struggle of nearly six hundred years. Your philosophers, then, cannot appeal to the phenomena of Christian nations to sustain their theory. Those phenomena are peculiar, singular, and authorize no conclusions beyond the nations in which they are exhibited.

Nor is this all. If Christianity were a natural development, the nation once professing it, on ceasing to do so, would necessarily appear in advance of the nations adhering to it, and in advance also of what it was itself before; for

it could reject Christianity only by outgrowing it and attaining to something superior to it. How happens it, then, that this is not the fact? How happens it, that the reverse is what you always see, and that the nation which throws off Christianity invariably falls below the nations which remain faithful, and below what it was itself when it was Christian? The fact is undeniable. A great part of Asia was once Christian; but what is that part of Asia now in comparison with what it was then? Compare the Alexandria of Clemens, Origen, St. Athanasius, and St. Cyril with the Alexandria of Mehemet Ali, or Ibrahim Pasha; or the Northern Africa of Tertullian, St. Cyprian, and St. Augustine with that of Abdel Kader and the Bey of Tunis! The Eastern or Greek Empire, long after the introduction of Christianity, surpassed the Western in wealth, refinement, learning, talent, and genius. What is it now? Do you say that barbarians overran and conquered it? So did barbarians overrun and conquer the Western; but the church was there; it arrested them, converted them, and has made them the leading nations of the globe. The Eastern broke the unity of the faith, separated itself from the central fountain of Christian life, and fell beneath the barbarians, with no power to civilize them, or finally expel them as Spain did the Moors. It has ceased to exist, and its conquerors, unchristianized, remain barbarians as they were at the epoch of the conquest. Even Protestant nations, under a moral and religious point of view, have fallen far below what they were when they were Catholic nations. The only progress you boast is progress in the material order, and even that is more specious than real. Catholic nations themselves decline rapidly, as we see in France, Spain, Portugal, and Spanish and Portuguese America, whenever they forget for a moment their faith, and seek to subject the spiritual authority to the temporal. Paris under the reign of the Terrorists, the pupils of your philosophers,—for French incredulity was borrowed from Locke and the English Deists,—recalled all too vividly the abominations of pagan Athens or Rome. In every country as the church recedes the old national superstitions sprout anew. Germany is fast reviving her old nature-worship, and Scandinavia threatens to reinstate Woden and Thor, and to indulge again the prospect of quaffing nectar from the skulls of her enemies in the halls of Walhalla.

Evidently, my brethren, your philosophers cannot appeal

to Christian nations to support their theory of progress, on the ground that Christianity is the result of human progress by natural causes. You must bear in mind that the nations of the Old World that practised the abominations of heathenism, were the mightiest and most renowned nations of the earth. They astonish even in their ruins. In general science, arts, literature, and refined polish they remain unapproached by modern nations. No poet rivals Homer, not even Shakespeare; and Plato and Aristotle can still teach us philosophy. We still study the classics as our models, and none of our orators reach the eminence of Cicero and Demosthenes. In purely intellectual and artistic culture, modern Italy falls below ancient Athens; and in statesmanship and the conduct of armies the ancients have never been surpassed. In vigor of intellect, in depth and acuteness of thought, in logical subtilty and force, the old heathen philosophers leave the modern far behind. Reason, as simple natural reason, was more assiduously cultivated with them, and received a fuller and, in the region of abstract thought, a more harmonious development than it receives with us. We can raise no question in moral or intellectual philosophy, and can wring out from unassisted reason no answer they did not obtain. In whatever point of view we consider the ancient heathen nations they had all that nature and natural cultivation can give. None can be found more richly endowed or more generously favored by nature than they were. No natural advantage can be conceived which they had not. They were in a condition to give, and did give, reason a fair trial; have shown us the best it can do when left to itself. We surpass them in nothing except in what we owe to Christianity, perhaps even fall below them. Yet with all their advantages, with all their intellectual and artistic culture, with all their power and greatness, which still excite the wonder and admiration of the world, they sunk in gross superstition, practised the most abominable idolatries, and made no advance towards the Christian religion, and continued ever to recede further and further from it. How idle, then, to pretend that Christianity has been attained to by the natural development and growth of human reason! Be Christianity true, or be it false, you can never regard it as following in the order of natural development and simply marking, as your philosophers would persuade you, a stage in the continuous progress of humanity.

Even allowing your philosophers to appeal to the facts of Christian history, they could obtain from the history of Christian nations, since they embraced the faith, no argument in favor of their doctrine of progress. The Christian religion was as perfect in the state it was left in by the apostles as it is now. Indeed, if your ministers are to be credited, it was much more so, for they contend that we have corrupted it; and, while asserting progress, strangely enough maintain that Christianity hardly gained a footing in the world before it was despoiled of its truth and beauty, and changed into a degrading superstition. Your early Reformers justified, or attempted to justify, their protest against the church, on the ground that she had buried the Christian religion beneath a mass of rubbish, and that it needed to be disinterred and restored to its original simple and majestic proportions. The sign they placed over the doors of their conventicles was, *Primitive Christianity restored here.* But let all this be as it may, it is evident that there has been no progress in Christianity itself. The saint of the first century is not surpassed by the saint of the nineteenth, and the Christians of the martyr age were not in faith, piety, charity, fervent zeal, constancy, and heroic fortitude, inferior to the Christians of our own times. The great writers, fathers, and doctors of the first ages of the church, the Justins, the Clements, the Origens, the Athanasiuses, the Hilaries, the Cyrills, the Chrysostoms, the Basils, the Gregories, the Ambroses, the Jeromes, the Augustines, the Leos, remain unrivalled; and all the most learned, able, and profound of our day can do is to adapt to modern tastes and controversies what we have directly or indirectly learned from the great doctors and fathers of the first four centuries of our era. There is no modern controversy that they have not anticipated and exhausted, no recent novelty introduced that was a novelty to them. The best things that have been said on modern Mesmerism, somnambulism, clairvoyance, and kindred topics are to be found in St. Augustine, and modern philosophy makes progress only in returning to his profound and luminous pages, and reproducing the ancient philosophy as modified and perfected by him. Those who speak disparagingly of the fathers only prove that they lack the necessary preparation for understanding and appreciating them. The more one knows himself the more will he be lost in wonder and admiration of the vast learning, the deep and masculine

thought of the fathers, who seem to have added to all the gentile world had attained to, all the profounder wisdom and truth of Christian theology. No, there has been no progress in Christianity itself, nor even in the understanding of it by its great teachers, and regarded as an answer to the question, what is the worship of God? and as affording the aids necessary to enable us to render it, there not only has been no progress in it, but none is even allowed.

The progress observable in Christian nations, is extrinsic, not intrinsic, and consists in a wider diffusion of Christian belief and practice, in the more complete incorporation of Christian doctrine and precept into their institutions, and in the removal of external impediments to the free course of the Gospel, or, finally, in matters not necessarily implying any moral or religious improvement. The moderns are said to have surpassed the ancients in the accumulation of facts pertaining to the physical world, in the physical sciences, and in the application of science to the productive arts. This, perhaps, may be questioned, for the tendency of all later scientific discoveries and speculations is to reaffirm ancient scientific doctrines; but even conceding it, no argument can be drawn from it in favor of the sort of progress asserted by your philosophers. A man neither extends his knowledge of his duty nor strengthens himself to perform it by learning the names, numbers, and magnitudes of the stars, by becoming acquainted with the properties of the wheel, the pulley, the screw, and the lever, or of oxygen, azote, and chlorine,—with mica, quartz, feldspar, and grauwacke, or with the modern systems of banking and stocks; and it is not easy to believe that one cannot worship God and fulfil the only purpose of his existence without spinning-jennies, power-looms, steamboats, railroads, air-balloons, and lightning-telegraphs. These things may all be useful to us as a superior sort of animals, or may not be, but they are not necessarily followed by any moral or religious improvement. They throw no new light on any question of duty, and are far from exciting us to seek after God and to render unto him the tribute of our being. Indeed, exclusive devotion to them always marks a moral and religious deterioration, because it shows that men have their faces set not towards God, but towards creatures. When we set our faces towards God and give ourselves up to the contemplation of God and his perfections, we learn him and his works in him; but when we

turn our backs upon him, and set our faces towards creatures as creatures, we learn neither him nor them, for they are nothing without him, and his being and perfections are not in them, but in himself.

That man himself is progressive in the sense asserted by your philosophers is contradicted by all the monuments of history, and even by reason itself. Nations outside of Christendom may modify their institutions, and grow, as grew Rome and Carthage, by industry, arts, and arms, from the petty burgh or feeble colony to mighty and renowned empires. Progress of this sort is conceded, but is not to be counted. It may be, and usually is, effected by reason serving as the slave of sensitive appetite, of passion, or of lawless will,—by individual and national unscrupulousness, or forgetfulness of duty. The material greatness, power, or prosperity of a state affords no practical test of its moral wisdom or religious virtue. The history of the renowned states and empires of gentile antiquity is the history, as every school-boy knows, of an almost unbroken series of wrongs and outrages, of violence and rapine, of tyranny and oppression. There is scarcely a page that is not soiled with immorality and besmeared with blood. Sparta was the hard-hearted mistress of the Helotæ, and recognized no virtues but those of the camp. She legalized adultery and the murder of children. Athens in her palmiest days robbed her confederates or allies, and contained in her bosom four hundred thousand slaves to some twenty or thirty thousand freemen. Rome was founded in iniquity and cemented by crime. Her citizens were, for a time, brave, temperate, and prudent, but her bravery, temperance, and prudence were employed only in subjugating the world. Great Britain has prospered, till she boasts that the sun never sets on her empire, but she is gorged with plunder, and the sun rises and sets on no land with which she has had relations that does not, like oppressed Ireland and India, curse her very name. Who knows not that even the national sense of justice and individual faith and morality, in our republic of the United States is far from keeping pace with its industrial and commercial prosperity, and that as a people we grow corrupt, rotten within, just in proportion as our phosphorescent splendor attracts admiration without? Progress of this sort, however great or continuous, we cannot count, for it is not progress in the knowledge and worship of God.

I know very well that your more recent philosophers,

those to whom you listen with the most reverence and enthusiasm, and whose words sound most eloquent in your ears, and fetch the warmest response from your hearts, tell you that progress is the universal law, and that the doctrine that man, even nature itself is continuously progressive is the authentic Gospel of the nineteenth century. Whoever has the audacity to question it, they brand as a traitor to humanity, and hold up to public derision and scorn, as one whose "eyes are in his hind-head not in his fore-head," and who, like the possessed Gadarene, dwells only among the tombs. Some of them not content with asserting the progressiveness of man and all natures, or the entire universe, go so far as to maintain that God himself is progressive! Progress is in proceeding from imperfection towards perfection, and can be predicated of no being already perfect. To assert that God is progressive is to deny his perfection, and to deny his perfection is to deny that he is at all. The progress of the universe must be the progress of the several natures of which it is composed, and, in the sense of your philosophers, not a progress in the return to God as their final cause, but a progress in their being or existence, powers or attributes as second causes. But progress in this sense is a metaphysical impossibility, and it is no mean refutation of it, that men are found in the nineteenth century who not only assert it, but pass for great men, philosophers, luminaries of their age, because they assert it. What is not cannot act, and for a being to make itself more than it is, for so much as it makes itself more than it is, is simply nothing making itself something, that is, that which is not acting, and doing what God only can do,—creating something from nothing.

To assert the progressiveness of human nature is absurd. Man in that he is man, has received from his Maker a determinate nature, that with which he is and must be born, or he ceases to be man. Change that nature in its essence, by making it essentially more, or essentially less, and you destroy his existence as a human being. If he is to remain man, his nature must remain always the same. Every one to be born a man, from the first man of our race to the last, must be born with the same identical nature. All must, then, be born with the same faculties, and these faculties must be essentially the same in all men, of every age and nation. Then no progress of nature, and then none of reason as a human faculty. If then reason has uniformly proved herself insufficient to

answer the question, What is the worship of God? satisfactorily to herself, she must as natural reason always prove herself insufficient. You cannot then remove the difficulty created by the past insufficiency of reason by calling in to your aid the modern doctrine of progress. The fact that nations, with reason, and reason assiduously cultivated, too, have produced and practised the abominable idolatries and superstitions to which I have referred, stands forever as an invincible proof that reason left to herself, is insufficient for reason.

V.—NATURE NOT SUFFICIENT FOR NATURE.

There are two and only two ways in which God can make known to us the worship he demands, and the way and manner in which he requires it to be rendered. These are natural reason and supernatural revelation. While it is certain that it belongs to God and to him alone to prescribe the worship he demands, it is equally certain that he does not prescribe it through natural reason. Then either he does not prescribe it at all or he prescribes it through supernatural revelation. If he does not prescribe it at all, that is, if we have no supernatural revelation, if we are left to our natural reason alone, we are in the sad condition of owing a duty which we are unable to pay.

Do not rashly infer from this, that we are to discard reason. The necessity of revelation is not grounded on the denial of reason, but on the plainest and simplest dictates of reason herself. We do not need revelation because reason in her own sphere is a false and uncertain light. Reason, as far as her light extends, is a true light, and to deny her is no less to blaspheme God than to deny revelation. Those advocates of revelation who begin by doing their best to destroy the authority of reason act as foolishly as the astronomer who should put out his natural eyes in order the better to see through his telescope. Reason is always to be presupposed, as grace always presupposes nature; for if there were no nature, there could be no subject of grace, and if no reason, no subject of revelation. Revelation, if made at all, must be made to reasonable beings, not to brutes. But because reason is presupposed, because her light is necessary to render man capable of receiving a revelation, it is not necessary to conclude that he can know without a revelation all that he can know with it. The telescope is of no service to a man who has no eyes; but it would be idle to infer from

this that he could see with a telescope nothing which he could not see with his eyes without one. To assert the necessity of revelation is not to deny or even to disparage reason, for reason asserts its necessity to enable us to do what she declares herself unable to do.

We must accept and respect reason, for to reject her would be to reduce ourselves from the rank of reasonable beings to that of mere animals; but if we do accept and respect reason we must concede that almighty God places us under an obligation to worship which we are unable by our natural light and strength alone to fulfil.

This is the terrible fact that always and everywhere rises up to confound the rationalist, be he of what school he may. Rationalists,—I mean those who assert the sufficiency of reason,—bring various objections to revealed religion, and pretend that no revelation is necessary. They hold that it is very possible to construct by reason alone a perfectly consistent and coherent system of religion and morals adequate to all the wants of reason, unless we have supernatural information that something more is needed. God, say they, may have made a supernatural revelation, and they who maintain that he has may be consistent with themselves in insisting on a supernatural religion, but those who are not assured that he has done so, or who have not that supernatural religion, have still natural religion and natural morality, complete and all sufficing in themselves for the natural order, and therefore from reason alone not to be convicted of insufficiency. But, unhappily for them, the facts in the case prove the reverse. No system of purely natural religion and morality has ever been or can be constructed on a purely rational basis, with which reason herself is or can be satisfied.

The simple fact, my brethren, is, that reason is always too much or too little for itself, and therefore too much or too little for any system of pure rationalism. It goes too far in the assertion of principles, unless it could go further in their intellectual realization. As we find it now in all men, its power of conception outruns its power of realization. It can neither bring its conceptions down to its power of intellectually realizing them, nor its power of realization up to them. Nothing can surpass our apprehension of principles; nothing is more pitiable than our practical application of them in the intellectual order, no less than in the moral. We measure the distances, and determine the revolutions, of the

heavenly bodies, but we cannot tell what the heavenly bodies are; we know well that we must worship God, but we know not by reason what is the worship of God, nor what is the way and manner in which it is to be rendered. When questioned as to what is this worship, reason uniformly stammers out some loose, vague, and incoherent reply, which she has no sooner stammered out than she recalls to stammer out another not a whit less vague, loose, incoherent, and unsatisfactory. Interrogate reason as you will, and you will find her answers are always vague generalities, of no practical significance, and that without the aid of a light superior to her own, she is utterly unable to answer any thing clear, distinct, positive, and practical. The most she can say is, Worship God, and you will worship him;—be good and do good, and you will be good and do good. With all my heart; but what is it to be good and do good? What is it to worship God?

The rationalist fancies that he escapes the difficulty by alleging that God is just, and therefore neither will nor can demand of man what man is not able to give. If he has given us only reason, he can demand of us only such worship as we with reason alone can render. Abstractly considered, this is no doubt true; but the question for us is not, what is true simply in the abstract, for all abstractions are unreal, but what is true in the concrete, that is, what is true taking man as he actually exists in the present providence of God. If man subsisted in his normal state, and his reason remained in him in its original vigor and rightful supremacy the rationalist might be right; but since reason confesses her own inability to prescribe in the concrete the worship we owe to God, we must conclude, against the rationalist, either that man is through his own fault in an abnormal state, or that reason has, as we now find it in all men, received some intimation at least that the worship God demands is above its ability to prescribe. Reason unequivocally asserts that we are bound to worship God in the way and manner he himself prescribes, and just as unequivocally asserts that she is unable to determine what is that worship, or what are the way and manner in which he requires it to be rendered. She then asserts that it is not through her that he informs us what it is or what is the way and manner of rendering it. Here is the difficulty. Reason affirms with equal clearness the obligation to worship and our inability with reason alone to fulfil it, and we must accept her affirmation in the one case as well as in the other.

The rationalist insists that if God has given us only reason, he can require of us only such worship as reason herself is able to prescribe, and therefore if we render him such worship as we are able by reason alone we fulfil the obligation to worship. True, if we are in our normal state, and have not by any fault of ours weakened the original strength of reason, or obscured its original brightness. But taking reason as now found in all men, in its actual state, this is not true, and reason herself declares that it is not true, for it practically amounts merely to this, that all the worship God demands is the worship which each one takes to be true worship, that is, which seems to each one to be right and just in his own eyes. It must come to this at last, for if by reason we cannot seize the truth itself, we can only substitute for the truth our view of truth. All men as men are equal and no one man has any right to impose his views upon another, nor have any body of men, however constituted, however named, any right to impose their private convictions on others. Man has no right in himself or in his own name to legislate for man on any subject whatever, for as man no one has any prëminence or dominion over another. Have not you all said this when asserting your Protestantism that is, the liberty of private judgment, against us? And do not your liberal Christians say it again and again, in season and out of season, when defending themselves against those of you who attempt to set up the authority of your sect over them? Have not we established it in establishing that our only obligation is the obligation to worship God? And what foundation have you for the liberty you profess to esteem so highly, but the fact that men are accountable to God, and to God alone? If man has no authority over man, and if God speaks to man only in reason, and reason is unable to prescribe the true worship, you cannot assert that such worship as reason can prescribe is sufficient without asserting that what is true and right in each one's own eyes, that is, not truth and justice but our view, notion, or opinion of them, is all that is necessary to fulfil the obligation to worship.

This, my brethren, will not do. While reason forbids one man or any number of men to impose their private convictions or opinions on others, it unequivocally asserts that there is and can be but one true faith, one true worship, one true religion. We need no supernatural revelation to tell us this; we know it by natural reason itself. God is one and immutable; all men, since as men all are equal, hold to him one and the

same invariable relation; consequently the worship founded in that relation must be one and the same for all. Hence all men in that they are bound to worship God at all are bound to render him one and the same worship, to have one and the same religion. Nothing is clearer or more certain. Yet whenever the question comes up, what is this worship, what is this one religion, what does it require us to believe, and what does it command us to do? we by the natural light of reason alone are, as the experience of six thousand years proves, utterly unable to answer. Men differ from one another, and the same experience proves, that, if left each to offer the worship that seems to himself right, there will be as many different worships or different religions as worshippers, because though reason is herself the same in all and in each, her practical applications are modified and determined by each one's individual extrinsic and intrinsic peculiarities. Yet truth is one, always and everywhere the same, and men cannot differ from one another but in proportion as they differ from the truth. When they differ they may all be wrong, and only one among them can be right. In so far as they are wrong, or differ from the truth, their worship must be wrong, be false worship, not true worship. But reason, if unable to say what practically is true worship, is yet abundantly able to say that no false worship is or can be acceptable. Reason, then, does not, and cannot say as your rationalists allege, that God exacts only that each one offer the worship that seems to him right in his own eyes. She will have no *seeming* in the matter; she will have not the seeming, but the reality, the thing itself. We must worship really and truly, and no more seeming worship will suffice, for reason can tolerate nothing that is unreal or false.

If you take the contradictory ground that the worship which will fulfil the obligation is not that which is true in itself, but that which appears to be such to the worshipper, you recognize as acceptable worship all the various worships which have ever obtained amongst men,—all the foul and filthy superstitions and abominable idolatries of all ancient and modern heathendom,—from which you have seen that both reason and humanity recoil with horror and disgust; for you cannot say that they have not all appeared to those who have practised them to be the true worship, or at least the truest worship they knew how to render. All you can say is, they do not appear so to you, and therefore for you they are not true worship; but for those to whom they do appear so they are true worship.

The worship of God is not distinguishable from merely, but includes them, as you have seen, as an integral part of itself. Insist then, not on what is strictly right and true, independently of your notions of truth and justice, but simply on what appears to the actor to be so, and you make right and wrong vary with the varying notions of each individual, and deny all invariable standard of right and wrong, and your ethics instead of depending on the universal, immutable, and eternal law of justice, will depend solely on the private convictions, caprice, or idiosyncrasies of each separate individual. The same thing shall be right for you and wrong for me. Every thing is right for me that I judge to be right, and every thing wrong that I judge to be wrong. This is false and absurd. Conscience is good or bad, as it does or does not conform to the law of God; and men are as much bound to have a good conscience as they are to follow conscience; and if they are sometimes excusable, through invincible ignorance, in acting from a false conscience, yet never in so acting do they fulfil the obligation to worship, or acquire positive virtue.

We know by natural reason alone, that the distinction between right and wrong is not arbitrary, relative, accidental, or variable, but eternal, independent, and immutable. Right and wrong depend on no arbitrary constitution of things, but on an eternal, immutable, and universal law, which is the eternal and immutable nature of God, regarded as the final cause of creation, and ultimate end of all moral creatures. This law is the same for all men, in all places, at all times, and under all circumstances, and instead of being the creature of our notions or convictions, is independent of them, unaffected by them, and they are themselves right only by virtue of conformity to it. We do not make the law; we are under it, and must conform to it, obey its precepts, or be condemned by it. The moment you substitute one's view of truth for the truth itself, you virtually deny all truth and all falsehood, all right and all wrong, and make them mere relative matters, one or the other, according to one's mode of seeing, feeling, or thinking. What is truth in relation to one is falsehood in relation to another; what is falsehood in relation to you may be truth in relation to me,—right in relation to me, wrong in relation to you, and so there is nothing true or right in itself, alike such for all men. This is the conclusion to which the rationalist is always obliged

to come at last, that is, the assertion of the sufficiency of reason involves in fact the denial of reason.

Yet, my brethren, false and absurd as this is, I find many among you, and in principle all of you, gravely advocating it. You all seriously contend that it is not necessary to believe the exact truth, and most of you contend that the sectarian differences among you do not at all affect your essential unity. You even contend that they are not evil, but upon the whole advantageous, inasmuch as they present a great variety of views, or as you express it truth under diversified aspects, as if these diversified aspects of truth, if important for one were not equally important for all! The more advanced sects among you boldly avow that truth and falsehood, right and wrong are only relative terms, have only a relative existence. Truth in itself, as an objective and independent reality, they tell us either does not exist at all, or if it exists it is unknown to us, and even exceeds our power to know. Of that we can affirm, we can deny, nothing, and truth and falsehood are for each individual what he esteems to be such. It is true to *me*, they say, and that is enough. What I hold to be true is true for me, what you hold to be true is true for you; so of falsehood, and so of right and wrong, just and unjust. That is every man's opinions are true for him, every man's actions are right for him! That is to say, all opinions and actions in themselves are indifferent, and their difference depends solely on the manner or mode in which the individual views them for himself. Where then is the reason for condemning or approving one or another? What is the authority for saying my mode or manner of viewing is better than yours, or yours better than mine?

Nevertheless, these enlightened Protestants, for such they profess to be, do not appear to be aware that in taking this ground they acknowledge the utter insufficiency of reason; for if there is no truth independent of one's own convictions known or capable of being known, they cannot even assert that their own convictions are to be held as truth for them, and far less that to act according to them is all that God demands of them. They lay down the general principle that what each one holds to be truth is truth for him. This principle is either true or it is false. If true, there is a truth independent of private conviction, namely, this principle itself, and then the very truth of the principle would prove its falsehood. If false, then, of course,

they cannot maintain that there is no objective truth necessary to be apprehended and believed. They either know their principle to be true, or they do not. If they do not, they have no right to assert that what each esteems to be truth is truth for him. If they do know it to be true, they know it to be false, for then they know there is a truth independent of private conviction or opinion. But they cannot at once know a thing to be true and know it to be false. So in either case they are unable to assert their doctrine, and must, if they contend that reason is incapable of presenting truth independent of private convictions, conclude the utter insufficiency of reason.

Moreover, these same persons who maintain the objective indifference of all doctrines and conduct, and deny all real distinction between truth and error, right and wrong, just and unjust, holding that all religions, all codes, and all systems are equally good and holy for those who sincerely accept them, are among the most censorious and belligerent members of the community. You find them, in fact, making war upon all received forms of faith and worship, upon all recognized codes of morals, public or private, that differ from their own private speculations or fancies. They nowhere find any thing to approve. Professing a system of universal optimism, they look upon all things as out of joint. Every thing has hitherto gone wrong. Man has never yet been truly and properly man; society has never yet been really constituted; religion from the outset has been a degrading and corrupting superstition; the light of reason has never dawned on the world; the human heart has slumbered and slept from the beginning; and the human race can take no step forward in the fulfilment of its destiny, unless it retraces its past course, undoes all that it has thus far done, and recommences its work anew. And yet, the moment you press them to adduce their authority for this sweeping condemnation of all the past, they excuse themselves on the ground that there is no invariable standard of right and wrong, just and unjust, truth and falsehood, and that these depend entirely on the convictions, views, or opinions of each individual for himself! They tell us every man is right who believes himself right, and they raise their hand against every man who does not believe and act with them!

Nevertheless, my brethren, these persons are among the most learned, intelligent, and respectable in your ranks.

They are for the most part at present the great men of your party. They are very inconsistent, I grant, but the inconsistency into which they fall is not peculiar to them, nor should it call forth any extraordinary surprise or indignation. It is only the same inconsistency, as to its substance, that you mark in the greatest and most renowned men in the world's history, in all, in fact, who leave the church of God and take reason alone for their guide, or even the Bible interpreted by private judgment. No man ever yet trusted himself to such guidance and remained consistent with himself, or without arriving at conclusions that reason is eager to disown. The fact is undeniable. It is the standing reproach of all your ministers, and indeed of all speculative men from Plato down to Charles Fourier and Robert Owen. Here is a remarkable fact. Whence comes it? Whence comes it that we can never trust ourselves in practical matters to the guidance of reason without sooner or later falling into unreason? There must be some cause for it; and it is too universal, too uniform, too invariably reproduced in every department of life, to be the result of any cause merely local and transient. The cause must be in reason itself,—in the fact that taken alone, it is either too much or too little for itself.

This fact, or rather contradiction, is not confined to reason alone; it runs through all human life which is abandoned to simple nature. Let human nature act according to its present laws, give to each faculty its natural exercise, to each tendency its natural gratification, to the whole the natural objects it craves, and it is never further from having attained to its good, its destiny. This is seen in the well-known fact, that pleasures sought for their own sake do not please, wealth does not enrich, honors do not ennoble, knowledge does not enlighten. All men experience this in a degree; the sages and philosophers of all ages proclaim it, and from it proceed the deep and painful tragedies of human life. All your popular literature, expressing the tone and temper of the age, bears witness to it. Take, for example, one of your popular novels from the school of George Sand, or from that of the Countess Ida Hahn-Hahn, before she became a Catholic, and study its heroine. What is she? She is young, beautiful, cultivated, full of life, sentiment, emotion. Nature has lavished upon her every perfection, art every accomplishment, society every luxury. She is well-born, rich, learned in all languages

and in all lore,—intellectual, sprightly, witty, profound, quick of apprehension, patient of investigation. In a word, she has all nature at her feet, in her hand, in her head, and in her heart. Alas! she is the most miserable of beings. Life for her is aimless, joyless. A thousand tragedies are daily, hourly enacted in her over-sensitive heart. She sighs for what she has not. She wants some object to love,—some one that can love, as she would be loved, in return. Over all she has or is floats an ideal that lures her on and will not let her rest. She must realize it. She goes forth, visits the court and the camp, the palace and the cottage, the gay saloon of wealth and fashion, the low haunts of vice and crime, and the humble shed of toiling, drudging poverty, in pursuit of him who is to be the realization of her ideal. Where is he? She finds him,—no; he is not the one. She dismisses him with disgust and takes another, another, still another, with no better success. No one comes up to her ideal; no one realizes or can realize it. Alas! she is doomed to suffer eternally the torture of an unrealized ideal. With all the world to choose from, she can choose no one that can fill the deep wants of her capacious heart. What is the meaning of all this? Do not say these novels are all mere idle romance, all mere fiction. You know better. Your novelists, immoral as they may be, dangerous as their productions certainly must be, are among the most distinguished and even truthful of uncatholic writers. Unscrupulous they may be, but they are persons of broad sympathies and large experience. They are no closet dreamers. They write out from the deep, rich, and living nature within them to the deep, rich, and living nature around them. Hence their popularity. In showing you their heroes and heroines running over the world seeking in vain the realization of their ideal, the object which can fill the heart, they but show what every one abandoned to nature experiences,—but proclaim the universal secret of an irreligious age. This heroine,—what is she but poor human nature, abandoned to her own light and strength? Nay, is not this virtually what they themselves tell you? Is it not their boast, that they draw from nature, and paint her as she is? And what, then, is the moral they teach, but this, that human nature abandoned to nature is too much or too little for herself?

You, my Protestant brethren, ought to take an especial interest in this mysterious fact, this inherent contradiction

of nature, this strange disproportion between the conception and the power of realization, the abstract and the concrete. You are the children of what you call the "Glorious Reformation." You walk in the midst of its effulgence, and you boast that for you there shines a warmer and a brighter sun than for other men. You claim to be the "Movement party," the advanced and advancing portion of mankind, and you are long and loud in your boasts of the progress you have made. You hold that the present age has far outstripped all its predecessors,—is, as it were, a model age, in which all that nature, under intellectual, moral, or industrial relations, can give is possessed to an extent never before heard of, never even dreamed of. Have we not, you say, proved that mind is omnipotent over matter? Have we not annihilated distance, subdued the elements, made the winds and flames of fire our obedient servants, and the lightnings our messengers? Yet is it, my brethren, precisely in this very age that human discontent and human despair are at the flood, that the disproportion between the ideal and the power of realizing it becomes more glaring and more mournfully oppressive than in any former period of the world's history. Whence happens this? Whence comes it that this should occur in this very age, when men have the most of nature and the least of religion? Whence comes it that it should more especially occur in Protestant nations and with those individuals who wander furthest from the church, and try hardest to live according to nature, without recourse to the supernatural? That it is so is undeniable. Nothing can surpass the uneasiness, discontent, dissatisfaction, discouragement, despair even, of the uncatholic world in this present age. How explain this fact, without acknowledging that human nature, despoiled of the supernatural, or abandoned to herself, is without her necessary complement, without proportion, and inherently in contradiction with herself?

This contradiction, which runs through all human life and marks at once man's greatness and man's littleness, characterizing him as a being "darkly wise and rudely great," appears to be peculiar to the human race. In all the animal tribes a due proportion appears to be observed, and the destiny of each individual is sufficiently indicated by its natural tendencies. Give the animal the objects to which it naturally tends, and it shows itself satisfied, and appears to have found its good, realized its ideal. Why is

it not so in man? Why is he an anomaly in creation? We know the Creator observes a due proportion in all his works, and that he makes all things by weight and measure. How is it, then, that there is this want of proportion in man? Why is it that he, when he has procured the objects to which he is invited or impelled by his nature, is not satisfied, is not contented, as is the ox, the robin, or the bee, but is even more dissatisfied than before?

It is true that some seek to explain this fact by regarding it as a promise or prophecy of our immortality; but this explanation does not meet the whole difficulty, clear up the whole mystery; for immortality may be conceived as lying in the natural order, as the continuation of our present existence, without any essential change; and it is so that some entire Protestant sects actually do conceive it. The future life to which many of your number look forward, if they look forward to any, is only our natural life endlessly continued, and they expect their good from nature in that life as much as they do in this. But if our future life is to be a natural life, it offers no complement to our present life, and must present the same disproportion between the ideal and the actual, the same contradiction which now so tortures the hearts of all who are abandoned, or abandon themselves, to nature alone.

Others, again, attempt to overcome this painful disproportion by laboring to bring the ideal down to the actual, and persuading themselves that all these general principles and notions which transcend the power of the practical intellect are mere illusions. The wants the soul experiences, even when possessing the best and all that nature can give, are merely the effects, they tell us, of early prejudice or education, and would never be experienced, if men were only properly trained from their infancy. How far it is possible by skilful training to reduce men to the category of mere animals, it is not easy to say. That much to that effect might and would be accomplished, under the direction of your able philosophers, is highly probable; but it can hardly be believed that these philosophers would be able to obliterate all traces of the peculiarly human nature. The germs of a moral and rational nature would most likely still remain, for to stifle their growth is not precisely to annihilate them. But it is not easy to believe that these wants and these general notions originated either in prejudice or in education. It is hard to conceive how a prejudice

could have existed without something to create it, and in favor of that which had, and prior to it could have, no prototype in human experience. Education, again, may develop, but it cannot create,—perpetuate, but not originate. Education implies educators, and these could not develop what did not previously exist, or impart what they did not themselves possess. If they only developed what already existed in germ, the phenomena in question did not originate in education. If they imparted something new, whence did they themselves obtain it? The earth stands upon the back of the huge tortoise, but what does the huge tortoise stand on?

Before the educators appeared, mankind either had this experience, or they had not. If they had, the appeal to education explains nothing. If they had not, they must have had an experience the reverse of it. Instead of the disproportion now experienced, they must have experienced only porportion; instead of wants that cannot be satisfied, only satisfaction; and instead of general conceptions which transcend the power of the practical intellect, their practical understanding would have kept pace with their general conceptions. How, then, could these educators, who had only human authority, and only the power of an absurdity, an error, at best, an illusion, not only gain credit against all previous experience, but even succeed in changing the whole current of the universal experience of mankind? Who can believe it? Certainly, my brethren, nobody but your modern philosophers could believe a thing so incredible,—a doctrine which asserts the existence of effects without causes, and even *against* causes!

The singular contradiction to which your attention is called is not, as you have seen, confined to any one element of human nature or of human experience. It is not simply a fact of the world of sentiment or of feeling. According to its nature, it is found in reason as well as in sentiment, and the natural reason is no more satisfied with natural reason than our instinctive and sensitive nature is with the natural objects it craves. Yet the contradiction in the order of reason results from elements which cannot be abstracted without abstracting intellect itself. It results from the fact, that the general principles or notions of reason transcend the power of the practical understanding, or our power to raise our actual knowledge to their level. But take away these principles or notions, and reduce the general to the level of

the particular reason, and you take away the particular reason itself, and therefore all actual understanding. Without the general, the particular is inconceivable ; and if man had not these general principles, notions, or conceptions, which it is contended are mere illusions, he could have no practical intellect, and no practical knowledge whatever. He could then be no subject of the education supposed. Could you by education give to a horse, an ox, a dog, or a pig, an experience corresponding to what is now the universal experience of mankind ?

Philosophers may speculate as they will, and suggest such conclusions as they please, but this much is certain, that human nature, as we now find it in all men, has more or less than its complement. It undeniably wants proportion, and cannot be naturally harmonized throughout, either with itself or with the world in which it is placed. But the Creator does and must observe a due proportion in all his works, and skilfully adapt one thing to another, part to part, and means to ends. To maintain the contrary would be to implicate his wisdom and perfection. He is infinitely true, and as true in his works as in his words. No work of his can lie ; nothing, as it comes from his hands, can deceive, or in the remotest degree tend to deceive. Man's natural inclinations, instincts, desires, as he came from his Maker, must have been truthful, and have indicated the end to which he was appointed. His whole nature, whether able of itself to attain to that end or not, must have had its face turned towards it, and, if followed, could never have led from it. But take man as he now is and the reverse of this is the fact. Nothing is more certain than that he recedes from his true good just in porportion as he follows his natural bent ; and never is he further from his destiny, if destiny he has, than when he is most successful in securing the ends towards which he is naturally attracted or impelled. His nature, taken as sufficient of itself, constantly cheats him,—lies to him in every word and in every organ through which it speaks. It fulfils never a single promise which it makes, and his whole natural life is illusory and false. Here is the mournful fact asserted and confirmed by universal experience.

But, this cannot have been so in the beginning. We know God must have made us for some end, which is at once our destiny and our good ; because wisdom must, or belie its nature, act to some end, and goodness to a good end. It is the part of folly to act without acting to an end, and of evil

to act to a bad end. God is infinitely wise and good, and therefore must have assigned an end infinitely wise and good to all and each of his works. If the end is wise and good, the gaining of our true end is one and the same thing as gaining our true good, and whenever we gain an end without gaining our true good, we may know that it is not the end which was appointed us, or for which we were intended. We must not only have been intended for an end, but we must have been, as we came from our Creator, endowed, naturally or supernaturally, with the ability to gain it; for God cannot appoint a being a destiny without giving him the means of fulfilling it. The being must be placed on the plane of his destiny, between which and himself there is a due proportion. But it is clear from the facts of experience that man does not now stand on the plane of his destiny, that he has no natural destiny, because he cannot follow his natural bent without receding from his true good. Then, whether man had originally a natural destiny or not, it is certain that he has fallen from the plane of that destiny, whatever it was, and is not now in his normal condition. Certain it is, that his nature is now turned away from it; for he never finds his destiny in following the direction his nature indicates, which could not have been the fact in his normal state, whether his destiny was in the natural order or in the supernatural.

No man can analyze the facts of human experience without finding them prove incontestably that our destiny, whatever it be, lies above the level of our present natural powers. Our race, then, must have once possessed powers, natural or supernatural, which it does not possess now, and therefore powers which it must have forfeited or lost. All the facts of experience, as well as universal tradition, bear witness to some great catastrophe, to some terrible revulsion which man at some remote period must have suffered. The soul appears to every nice observer to retain traces of a lost grandeur, and to be filled with an undying regret for what once was, but is no longer, hers. She appears to be tortured by her reminiscences. Even before illumined by faith, she regards herself as expelled from her early home, as an exile from her native country, and a sojourner in a strange land. She bears with her the secret memory of a lost paradise, for which she sighs, and with her recollections of which, dim and fading though they be, she contrasts whatever she finds in the land of her exile. What is the poetry of all nations but the low

wail or wild lament of the soul over her lost Eden,—the sweet, sad music in which she expresses the wearisomeness of her banishment, and her longing to return and dwell again in the green bowers of her early youth, of her childhood's home? Here, in these reminiscences, which play so important a part in the Platonic philosophy, and which the Athenian knew not how to interpret, is the secret of that weariness and disgust which the soul experiences in the midst of all this world can give, of that deep regret and ceaseless sorrow which nothing earthly can charm away. Earthly goods and pleasures are not congenial to her nature; they are not the food she was originally fitted to live upon or to relish; the table the world spreads before her is not that which was spread for her in her Father's house; the embraces lavished upon her are not those of her chaste Spouse, and she receives or returns them only with a feverish shame.

The traditions of all ages and nations assert the fact of the primitive fall of man, and these traditions cannot be lightly dismissed, or their authority disputed, by any one who has learned to philosophize, or who knows how to weigh testimony. They could not have existed without a substratum of truth, known certainly at first, or warranted by evidence as wide and constant as human experience; and in either case they are the testimony of mankind, the highest testimony we can have, except the supernatural testimony of God himself. All religions and religious institutions, in whatever age or on whatever side of the globe they are found, imply, and expressly assert, that man has fallen from his primitive state. The idea of redemption, restoration, expiation, atonement, is the grand central idea of them all. They all are based on the assumption, that a *reparation* of some sort, to be effected in some way, by this or that agency, is essential. There is to this absolutely no exception. There never has been a religion which did not assert the necessity of *sacrifice*, and never has the human race been able to believe that a worship without a sacrifice, without the altar, the victim, and the priest, could be true worship. Thanksgiving and praise, prayer and adoration, are indeed regarded as proper and necessary in all religions, but no religious worship is ever regarded as complete, as including the one essential thing, that has not the victim to offer in expiation, or in reparation, of human delinquency.

What means, this victim, held by all religions to be indis-

pensable? Reason, while it teaches us to render unto God the tribute of our whole being, teaches us that this is all that is his due. We can owe him only what we have received from him, and can be bound to render him no more than we are and have. Yet this victim is something more, and in offering him the worshipper confesses that he owes to God what he is not and has not. Whence comes this, but from the conviction, on the part of the worshipper, that he has not retained, and has ceased to possess, all that he originally received, and that what he now is cannot be the equivalent of what he was when he came from his Maker? The victim is always offered, because we feel that more is due than the tribute of our whole present being, and therefore as an acknowledgment of a loss on our part, or in other words, of a fall. Sacrifice is, then, a confession of the fall,—that we have wasted our patrimony, spent our substance in riotous living, and owe more than we can pay,—a confession, in a word, of our insolvency. Hence it is that all those individuals who deny the fall deny the necessity of the victim, and reject the idea of sacrifice as a vulgar superstition. Hence, also, the universality of sacrifice proves the universality of the belief in the primitive fall, that man has fallen from his original state, and now lies below the level of his destiny, without the ability to attain to it.

Even your modern philosophers and reformers who assert the sufficiency of human nature for itself are far from being able to exclude the idea of the fall. Even for them human nature is not in its normal state. The Fourierist who boasts of his new social science, and tells you attractions are proportional to destinies, confesses that man as he now is cannot be trusted to follow his natural bent. Robert Owen and Fanny Wright hold that a preparatory discipline, to overcome the wrong direction heretofore given to human nature, is necessary before trusting man to his natural instincts. All your reformers, whether religious, moral, social, or political, are loud in their declamations against human depravity, and look upon man's nature as warped out of its right line, as turned away from its true good. Indeed, the very idea of *reform* implies the idea of a fall,—that man is in a lapsed state, out of his normal condition,—and nothing is more sad than to hear your reformers deny that man has fallen, extol his innate goodness, the purity and excellency of his nature, and at the same time berate all the past, and condemn him and all his institutions as worthless.

It makes nothing against the testimony of these, so far as the present argument is concerned, that they seek to explain the depravity they cannot deny, and against which they declaim, without admitting the fall in the Christian sense. Whatever explanations they attempt, they concede the fact than man has been perverted, turned away from his true good,—that his nature is in an abnormal state, and does not now operate according to its original intention. This fact once admitted, all is admitted. They may ascribe it to what cause they please; they may pretend that it originated in the separation of the individual from the unity of the race, in false systems of religion, morals, politics, society, in priestcraft, political tyranny, and oppression, but, in doing so, they only confirm it; for this separation from unity, these false systems, this priestcraft, tyranny, oppression, they must regard as abnormal, and therefore as effects of causes which could not be active in our normal state. They at best leave the fact itself unaffected, and do but bring the cause a step or two nearer, or remove it a step or two further off.

Nor any better will they succeed in getting rid of the fact itself, who allege as its cause that man was originally created imperfect, and never intended to attain to his destiny, but to be always attaining to it. These, the modern progressists, contradict themselves, because, while they assert progress, they demand reform. But reform and progress are fundamentally repugnant one to the other. Progress looks forward, and proposes a perfection never yet attained to; reform looks backward, and seeks to regain a perfection which has been departed from or lost through corruption. The idea of indefinite progress contradicts also the idea of destiny. An indefinitely progressive being can have no destiny, because destiny implies a definite end, and indefinite progress no end. It is a contradiction in terms to assert that a being is destined to eternal progress. Progress consists in going towards an end; but if there be no end but the progress, there is no end at all, and then no progress. It is incompatible with the essential idea of God to suppose that he creates beings in an imperfect state as to their nature. Being himself perfect, his works must be perfect, and then each creature must, as it comes from him, be perfect in its kind, possess all that pertains to its nature, and therefore be incapable of any other progress than that which consists in going to its end. It is no slight confirmation of this, that those of your philosophers who maintain the doctrine of indefinite progress generally end in atheism, as Condorcet, Hegel, Saint-Simon, Pierre Leroux, or in

a pantheistic nihilism, which is the same thing. Moreover, the assertion, that man was created imperfect in his kind, and intended to be eternally progressive, is not in its nature provable by reasoning, and, if provable at all, can be so only by a supernatural revelation, or by history. The first is not supposable, because the doctrine itself is invented chiefly for the purpose of getting rid of the necessity of revelation; and the last cannot be asserted, for to do so would be to recognize the authority of history, and history, if its authority is conceded, teaches the contrary, as we have already seen.

This established, you must come back to the fact asserted by universal tradition and by all experience, that our nature, as we now find it, is not in its normal state. As it now is, it is full of contradictions. Reason imposes an obligation which we are unable by reason alone to fulfil. From our nature we learn that it was intended for an end above its present capacity, and we know that it could not have been so in the beginning. We know, then, that our nature has fallen, and fallen, too, whether you assume, with the church, that it was never intended to have a natural destiny, that it was from the first appointed to a supernatural end, or whether you assume it to have been intended for a merely natural end.

VI.—REVELATION INSUFFICIENT.

Unquestionably, my brethren, we received originally from God, either naturally or supernaturally, the ability to ascertain and keep the law of God, that is, to ascertain and render unto him the worship he does and must exact. If we were intended for a natural destiny, we had the natural ability to attain to it, therefore to ascertain and keep the law of nature, for the law of nature is only that to which nature inclines and is adequate. Unquestionably, also, if we were able to find a natural destiny to which our nature is now adequate, for which it is neither too much nor too little, we should be obliged to assume that our nature is still in its normal state, that it has a natural destiny, and that supposing the Creator to preserve its existence and natural powers, it suffices for itself. We could then obtain from nature alone no argument for the necessity of any thing more than nature.

But man is not now in his normal or integral state, because he has now no natural destiny. Whether originally his destiny was natural or supernatural, we can know only as taught by revelation; for God may, for aught reason has to

say to the contrary, have originally intended him for a supernatural destiny, and made the supernatural endowment essential to the integrity of his nature, and without which he would have been adequate to no destiny; or God may have made him adequate to a natural destiny, and by supernatural gifts elevated him to the plane of a supernatural destiny. But however this may have been, it is certain that man has now no natural destiny, or that there is no destiny lying in the plane of our nature in its present state. Hence we cannot reason of our nature as if it were in what we may conceive to have been its normal or integral state: we must reason of it as it now is, and understand by the supernatural we find to be necessary the supernatural in relation to our nature in its present state, without assuming it to be or not to be supernatural in relation to it as it came from the hands of the Creator.

The whole argument from the natural to the necessity of the supernatural rests on the fact that our nature as it now is, has no natural destiny, is of itself adequate to no destiny at all. Nothing can in reality exist without a final cause any more than without a first cause. As to deny God as first cause is to deny all things, so is it to deny all things to deny him as final cause. Reasoning from final causes is as legitimate and as conclusive as reasoning from first causes, and in the moral order is the only legitimate reasoning. Since man has no destiny in the order of his present nature, it follows necessarily either that his destiny lies in the supernatural order, and thus is attainable to only by supernatural means, or that his nature is depraved, has fallen below his destiny, and thus not to be attained to without redemption or reparation not naturally possible. Either then there is supernatural redemption or reparation for us, or we have now no destiny, that is, no real good; for our good is in attaining to our destiny.

But, my brethren, more than supernatural revelation is needed to repair our nature, to reinstate us in our integrity, or restore us to what must have been our normal state, and enable us to render the worship which God does and must exact of us; for nothing is more certain than that men do not do as well as they know, or that our virtue is never in proportion to our knowledge. In addition to the supernatural revelation that enlightens the understanding and tells us what is the worship demanded, we need grace or supernatural assistance to move and strengthen us to render it.

God is the final as he is the first cause of all existences. He is our origin and end, the cause that creates us, and the cause for which we are created, as you have seen in the fact that we are his and not our own, and are morally bound to render unto him the tribute of our whole being. The good of every creature is the end for which it exists, and if we could conceive a creature existing for no end, such a creature would and could have no good. Hence God is our supreme good, because he is the supreme good in itself, and because he is our ultimate end. Our true good lies then in the possession of God, and we tend to it as we tend to him, that is, render ourselves unto him, or give him the worship that is his due, as has already been established.

The final cause is legislative, and the law every existence must be subject to is imposed by the end for which it exists. God as first cause is our Creator; as final cause he is our Lawgiver. The law he imposes must be obeyed as the indispensable condition of attaining to our end, and without obedience to it there is and can be in the nature of things no good for us, since it is the law imposed by eternal justice, and the sovereign good; for God as final cause of all existences is the sovereign good, and as sovereign Legislator is eternal justice.

Our normal state is that in which we stand on the plane of our destiny, with the ability to ascertain and fulfil it, and in perfect subjection to the law by which it is to be fulfilled. Hence it is a state in which we can and do tend with all we have and are to God as our ultimate end, that is, in which we obey his law, and offer unto him as his due the tribute of our whole being, body and soul. Hence, in our normal state the body must be subjected to the soul, the sensitive appetite to the reason and will, and reason and will to the law of God.

Now in the revulsion our nature has undergone in being wrested from its normal state, the reason or understanding has indeed suffered, but not alone, or chiefly. The will, the executive power of the soul, has been enfeebled, and the sensitive appetite disordered. The chief difficulty to our recovery lies precisely in enfeebled will and disordered appetite. The sensitive appetite escapes from subjection to the will, ceases to be in harmony with reason, and brings both reason and will into bondage to itself, and makes them serve as its slaves. Revelation which enlightens the understanding is indispensable, but of itself it only repairs the losses

suffered by reason. It adds nothing to strengthen the will, or to reduce disorderly and rebellious appetite or passion to proper subjection, that is, it leaves the chief loss unrepaired, the chief difficulty unremoved.

Having been despoiled of its original integrity, or wrested from its normal state, our nature is not now consistent with itself, and its several elements do not operate harmoniously. Human life is full of inconsistencies. These inconsistencies are only the exponents of the inconsistencies of human nature itself. There is no conceivable end to which our nature as a whole inclines. On one side we incline to one set of objects, and on another to an opposite set. We will indeed only good, real or apparent, of some sort, but we will the less instead of the greater, a nearer instead of a more remote good, and objects that please us to-day though we may forsee that they will give us pain to-morrow. The sensitive appetite is captivated and borne away towards objects, which we know, whenever we stop to reflect, will afford us no solid and durable good, nay, which are incompatible with our best good ; and yet we yield ourselves up to its importunity, and consent to follow it against our better judgment.

This, my brethren, you will bear me witness, is but the common experience of mankind. The sensitive appetite craves sensible goods, bears us away in the pursuit of wealth and sensual pleasures, distinctions, honors, or fame. No instruction can prevent it, no knowledge can give us power to resist it. It springs up spontaneously, is sweet and alluring in its beginning, and we concentrate all the powers of reason and will not to resist, but to gratify it. To possess what it craves, we regard no obstacles, pause at no difficulties, are deterred by no scruples, care not what laws we trample on, what rights we violate, what feelings we outrage, what hearts we break, what desolation and sorrow we leave behind us. It is not that we are ignorant that our conduct is wrong, or that we shall be wretched in the midst of success. We know all this, better than any one can tell us. We feel the emptiness of all sensible goods, the misery of all sensual pleasures. Yet we are impatient for sensual gratifications which do not please us, and to commit sins which we loathe. For not seldom we seek less a pleasure we have not than to get rid of an uneasiness we suffer ; and we are often wretched without that which it would, and we know it would, give us no happiness to possess.

No more intellectual instruction is sufficient to strengthen the will and reduce the sensitive appetite or passion to subjection. We start in life well instructed, with good principles, generous sentiments, and noble aims. Our best affections have been cultivated, our feelings refined, our manners polished, and our minds stored with the maxims of the wise of all nations and ages. We scorn what is mean and low, abhor what is vicious and criminal, and are resolved, let come what will, to maintain our moral integrity. We go forth; the world charms us by its novelty, life by its freshness and variety. We overflow with exuberant spirits, and expand in kindly sentiments to all. Suddenly new passions are unfolded within us; temptations assail us; we are off our guard; we stumble, we fall. It is but once; we will be on our guard next time; we will not fall again. We are ill-at-ease; temptations assail us anew from an unexpected quarter, and before our resolution is well formed, we are prostrate again. Again we rise, again we renew our resolution, and again we fall. And thus on till we either lose our moral sensibility and become hardened in vice and iniquity, or till wholly disheartened, oppressed with a sense of our infirmity, and the conviction that it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps, we sink down in utter despair, and attempt no more to rise.

Some, indeed, cool in their temperament, and full of pride, manage to preserve external decency, and to pass in the eyes of the world for honorable and upright: but their hearts are icy and selfish, and their very pride is immoral, a deep and aggravated sin. They do nothing from duty, from a love of God,—nothing because it is a precept of justice, or because God commands it. They are their own centre, and a god unto themselves. If they perform an act in itself commendable, or avoid a vicious or criminal act, they do it simply to please themselves, and to maintain their standing in their own eyes. A contrary conduct would be beneath them, or would not become them. They are of the school of Zeno the Stoic, and with admirable self-complacency recount their virtues, and thank God that they are not like the poor disciples of the Philosopher of the Garden. These need no instructions in their duty. None know better than they what the law of God requires of all men, or go before them in praise of virtue or in censure of vice, when they are not required to make the application of their knowledge to themselves. They need not knowledge but humility, and

with their pride the more knowledge you give them the less and less are they disposed to be humble, or to be dissatisfied with themselves, or to distrust their own virtue and integrity.

That knowledge alone does not suffice to reinstate us in our integrity, or to restore us to our normal state is now generally conceded even by those who deny the necessity of all supernatural reparation.

Some years since, it is true, there were a class of philosophers, or pretended philosophers, who, generalizing the doctrine of justification by faith alone, and erecting it into a philosophical doctrine, maintained, that knowledge, or mere intellectual cultivation could alone suffice not only to extinguish error, but vice and iniquity, and secure the universal practice of virtue. They placed the origin of sin in ignorance, as if themselves ignorant that ignorance, when invincible, excuses from sin, and that sin stands opposed not as ignorance to knowledge, but as folly to wisdom. Their speculations for a time were current, and people began to believe that nothing more is needed to regain the lost Eden than to have all children taught to read, write, and cast accounts. The school-house was to take precedence of the temple, and the pedagogue of the priest. Instead of sending out the missionary with the word of God and the sacraments of the church, we were to send out the schoolmaster with his ferule and black-board. "The schoolmaster is abroad," enthusiastically exclaimed a noted literary and political charlatan; "the schoolmaster is abroad, and the golden age has returned," enthusiastically responded the multitude. Forthwith rang the cry for popular education, lyceums, debating clubs, and societies for the diffusion of knowledge were everywhere formed, and the land was deluged with encyclopedias, cabinet libraries, penny magazines, and Peter-Parley tales. All wrongs were to be righted, and universal love, brotherhood and peace were to be secured by dull descriptions of natural or artificial curiosities, and by essays and lectures on chemistry, electricity, mechanics, geology, fishes, and bugs. Some few who take no note of the changes hourly occurring in this changeable world, and neglect to keep themselves posted up with the times, may fancy that this doctrine is still in vogue, and look upon your Lardners, Aragoes, Davies, Liebigs, Lyells, and Agassizes as the great luminaries of the world, and renovators of mankind, but the great body of your more re-

cent world-reformers, reject the doctrine as false and illusory.

Your more recent world-reformers, those who just now carry away the great body of your youth of both sexes in their train, though retaining some traces of the school in which they were educated, are all agreed that knowledge alone is not sufficient to reinstate us in the integrity of our nature. All your associationists, Owen, Saint-Simon, Fourier, Cabet, Leroux, Proudhon, proceed on the assumption of the insufficiency of mere intellectual instruction, and the necessity of bringing to bear on the will and the sensitive appetite some power not to be obtained from mere knowledge, not to be found in the individual even. They all, with one accord, reject the individualism of the last century, and appeal to the principle of association, hoping to obtain from it a power that the mere knowledge of right and wrong cannot generate.

Unquestionally the associationists seek association primarily for economical reasons, for the purpose of equalizing property, abolishing the distinction of rich and poor, and promoting the temporal prosperity or earthly happiness of mankind; but as no man, whatever his good will, can wholly divest himself of his moral nature, or entirely forget his obligation to worship God, they also seek it as the means of reintegrating mankind and restoring them to their normal state. They unquestionably err as to what would be the reintegration of mankind and their restoration to their normal state, and also as to the means of doing it, but it is undeniable that they contemplate it, and hold that to effect it some power not possessed by the individual is necessary to bring his practical conduct up to his knowledge.

It is true, that these same world-reformers have frequently the air of asserting the sufficiency of knowledge, but we are never to look for consistency in men who undertake to walk by the light of reason alone; and, moreover, they are for the moment more intent on the work of demolition than of construction. The old church asserting the necessity of the supernatural still stands, and they would pull her down and clear the site for their association. But when it comes to the work of building up, they all assert the necessity of a power, and aim at obtaining a power, of some sort, beyond that of simple knowledge, self-acting and self-perpetuating, to mould the individual into a true man, and secure him from losing again his integrity. Such is their principle and

aim, whether they themselves clearly understand themselves or not, and hence they concede, and, as they are fair exponents of the age in so far as it is unchristian, the age concedes in principle that education which merely removes the darkness of the intellect, or enlightens the understanding, is not alone sufficient, and that some additional assistance is requisite to enable us to render unto God what he does and must exact of us.

This assistance or reparation must be supernatural on the same principles on which is proved the necessity of revelation, or the supernatural reparation of reason. Either our nature was originally integral and adequate to a natural destiny, or as pure nature it never had a natural destiny, but was integrated and made adequate to a destiny supernaturally. Which is to be said is not determinable by natural reason, but whichever is said the reparation must be supernatural. If our nature was in the outset integrated only supernaturally, the loss of its integrity can, of course, be only supernaturally repaired. If its integrity was natural, its loss cannot be recovered naturally, because more power is requisite to recover what we have lost than to keep what we have, and our natural power even in the state of integral nature only suffices to preserve our integrity.

If a state of integral nature is assumed, it must be conceeded that our nature as it now is has suffered loss. In its integrity our nature must have been able to keep the law of nature, that is, must have been adequate to the maintenance of its own integrity; but this was the extent of its natural ability. Nature and the law of nature are the exact measure of each other. Naturally man can have only what is requisite to fulfil the law of nature, or to comply with the dictates of natural reason, into which the law of nature is convertible. Any thing more than this would be above nature, and if man could have it naturally, he could be naturally supernatural, which, though some theorists have been driven to assert it, is absurd. It requires, as everybody knows, more power to recover what we have lost, than it does simply to keep what we already have. To suppose then in our nature a power to repair its lost integrity, when all the power it originally had was just sufficient to keep it, is a contradiction. Nature provides only for nature, and if we suppose it to have been provided in its integral state with power to recover its integrity when lost, that power would be, if the integral state had been preserved, a surplusage, and

therefore above nature, supernatural, and we must suppose nature above itself, or that it is more than nature. If we say that nature had only the power requisite to preserve its integrity, then we must concede that it has no power to recover that integrity when lost, therefore it is either not recoverable at all, or recoverable only by supernatural means. So take what view we choose, the assistance or reparation cannot come from nature. Consequently, since the normal order has been lost and man needs reparation the power that repairs must be supernatural and either such power is supernaturally furnished, or the reparation is impossible.

Here, then, we are, if abandoned to nature as it now is. We have forfeited or lost the ability, whether natural or supernatural, which we once had to gain the end to which we are appointed, and can no longer render unto God what we owe him; for we owe him, not only what we now are, but all that we now are and all that we have lost. Now, before we can worship God in the manner he must prescribe, we must in some way be able to recover what we have lost, and render unto him all that we were originally bound, because originally able, to render unto him. How is this to be done? It must be done, or we do not fulfil the obligation which we know by reason we are under; if we do not fulfil that obligation, we cannot attain to the end for which we were intended; and if we do not attain to that end, we fail of obtaining our true good, for our good is identical with our destiny. We see the difficulty; and how is it to be overcome?

The question is the question of questions. It is terrible to feel that reason imposes an obligation which it cannot instruct us how to fulfil, to find ourselves with broad conceptions which we know not how to realize, with a sense of duty hanging over us which we cannot practically fulfil,—to hesitate between probabilities, to balance between uncertainties, to find the darkness increase as we advance, and finally to lose ourselves in doubt and bewilderment. But it is far more terrible to feel the burden of sin oppressing us, to know that we have wilfully disobeyed God, broken his law, forfeited his gifts, and are sinking down under his wrath with no power to rise, atone for our sins, and reconcile him to us. The burden of sin, of a debt we have contracted, are bound to pay, and have wilfully thrown away the means of paying, is of all burdens the heaviest. The soul, once become conscious of it, finds it intolerable, and

in her fright and anguish shrieks out, What shall I do to be saved? Reason herself, if exercised, is sufficient to enable, sufficient to compel, the soul to ask this fearful question; but what is and must be our condition, if we ask this question, and hear no answer but echo mocking us in the distance? Every man knows, without supernatural revelation, that he is in a fallen state, that he is but a wreck of a true man, and that he has personally sinned, and owes in eternal justice a debt he cannot pay, that he has squandered the means of paying,—that he has fallen below his destiny,—that there is for him, as he is, no destiny, no good, for ever; but though by his natural light he can see this, he can by it see no help, no deliverance, no issue. Justice is inexorable; natural reason knows no mercy, no pardon; nature can furnish no victim. The blood of bulls and goats has, and can have, no power in itself to purge the conscience, and wash away the stains of sin. There is to the eye of reason no deliverer, no protector, no shield between us and the divine vengeance which we have justly incurred. What can we do?

Every man abandoned to nature and the guidance of natural reason alone does and must find himself in this situation, the most painful, the most terrible, that can be imagined. It is certain, that, in this situation, unless God helps us, there is no help for us; that, unless he points out to us the way of deliverance, and grants us supernatural assistance, there are no means of our restoration, and no possible chance of our worshipping him as reason declares we are bound to worship him, or to gain the end, the good, to which we were appointed, and which was originally within our reach. Hence the necessity of supernatural revelation, and of supernatural assistance besides.

But it must be conceded, my brethren, that we cannot conclude the fact of supernatural assistance from its necessity, because the necessity is a necessity of our own creating, and our inability is the result of our own fault. If we were in our normal state, and if we had never been corrupted through sin, we could undoubtedly conclude the fact from the necessity, that what we did not possess naturally which we needed, either to fulfil our obligation or to gain our end, would be supernaturally supplied, and placed within our reach, so that we might avail ourselves of it, if we chose. But having forfeited what was once naturally or supernaturally supplied us, we cannot now, because we

need it, conclude that it must be restored to us, and we still able to avail ourselves of it. Here is the sad condition in which we all now naturally are, and out of which by reason and nature alone there is clearly no issue.

Are we, however, left in this condition? Has not God, in fact, had compassion on us, and has he not made us a revelation of his mercy? Has he not provided redemption for us, and made it possible for us to regain our original standing, to cancel our obligations, to render him the worship which is his due, and to attain to the good which he originally intended us? These are important questions, and well worthy of your serious attention. If they can be answered in the affirmative, there is hope for man; his face may resume the smile of gladness, and a well of joy may spring up in his heart. If not, there is for us nothing but the blackness of despair, unfailing sorrow, and ceaseless remorse,—weeping and gnashing of teeth for all men. Turn not lightly from these questions. Engrossed with the world, with its cares, its follies, its gayeties, its dissipations, you may for a moment silence the voice of reason, and disregard the admonitions of conscience; but a day must come, for it comes to all men, when the record of our lives will be unrolled before us, and we shall see ourselves as we are. May that day come to you ere it is too late!

THE CHURCH AGAINST NO-CHURCH.*

[From Brownson's Quarterly Review for April, 1845.]

The Journal, the title of which we have here quoted, is the ably conducted organ of the American Unitarians. As a periodical, it is one in which we take no slight interest; for it is conducted by our personal friends, and through its pages, which were liberally opened to us, we were at one time accustomed to give circulation to our own crude speculations and pestilential heresies. We introduce it to our readers, however, not for the purpose of expressing any general opinion of its character, or the peculiar tenets of the denomination of which it is the organ; but solely for the purpose of using the article which appeared in the January number, headed *The Church*, as a text for some remarks in defence of the church against no-churchism, or the doctrine which admits the church in name, but denies it in fact, so prevalent in our age and community.

All Protestant sects, just in proportion as they depart from Catholic unity, tend to no-churchism; and the Unitarians, who are the Protestants of Protestants, and who afford us a practical exemplification of what Protestantism is and must be, when and where it has the sense, the honesty, or the courage to be consequent, have already reached this important point. They cannot be said, in the proper sense of the word, to believe in any church at all. They see clearly enough, that, if they once admit a church at all, in any sense in which it is distinguishable from no-church, they can neither justify the Reformers in seceding from the Catholic Church, nor themselves in remaining aliens from its communion. They have, therefore, the honesty and boldness to deny the church altogether, and to admit in its place only a voluntary association of individuals for pious and religious purposes; in which sense it is on a par with a Bible, Mis-

*The Christian Examiner and Religious Miscellany, January, 1845—Art. VI. The Church.

sionary, Temperance, or Abolition society, with scarcely any thing more holy in its objects, or more binding on its members.

The *Christian Examiner*, in the article we have referred to, fully authorizes this statement; and though it by no means discards the sacred name of *Church*, it leaves us nothing venerable or worth contending for to be signified by it. The controversies for the next few years, it thinks, will not improbably revolve around the question of the church. "What, then," it asks, "is the church? what is its authority? what its importance? what its true place among Christian ideas or influences?" These are the questions; and its purpose in the article under consideration is to offer a few remarks which may indicate a true answer to them, especially the last.

In answer to the question, What is the church? the writer replies, "It is the whole company of believers, the uncounted and wide-spread congregation of all those who receive the Gospel as the law of life. It is coextensive with Christianity; it is the living Christianity of the time, be that more or less, be it expressed in one mode of worship or another, in one or another variety of internal discipline. The Church of Christ comprehends and is composed of all his followers."—pp. 78, 79.

The answer to the question, What is the importance of the church? is not very clearly set forth. Perhaps this is a point on which the writer has not yet obtained clear and distinct views. It is, probably, one of those points on which "more light is to break forth." The *place* of the church among Christian ideas and influences also is not very definitely determined; but it would appear that the sacred writers had two ideas,—for they were not, like our modern reformers, men of only one idea,—and these two ideas were, one the church, the other the individual soul. We do not mean to say that the writer really intends to teach that the church is an *idea*, for a "company of believers" can hardly be called an *idea*, nor can the individual soul; but he probably means to teach that the sacred writers had two ideas, or rather two points of view, from which they contemplated this company of believers,—the one collective, the other individual.

"They loved to collect—in idea—the members of Christ, *as they styled them*, under one idea, and present them in this relation of unity to their readers. Thus viewed, the Church became the *emblem* of Christian influences and Christian benefits. It expressed all Christ had lived for, or

died for. He had loved it, and given himself for it. It was 'the pillar and ground of the truth.' It was the 'body' of which he was the head." —p. 79.

This unity, however, is purely ideal; that is, imaginary. The only unity really existing consists merely in the similar sentiments, hopes, and aims of the individual members. But

"There was another idea on which the Apostles insisted still more strenuously, that of the individual soul. They taught the importance of the individual soul. Around this, as the one object of interest, were gathered the revelations and commandments of the Gospel. Personal responsibleness—in view of privileges, duties, sins, temptations—was their great theme. They preached the Gospel to the soul in its individual exposure and want. It is the peculiarity of our religion, its vital, peculiarity, that it makes the individual the object of its address, its immediate and its final action. Christianity divested of this distinction becomes powerless, and void of meaning. It contradicts and subverts itself."—*Ib.*

Here, then, are two ideas,—the idea of the *company*, and the idea of the *individual*; and the first idea is to be held subordinate to the second; which, we suppose, means that the end of Christianity is the redemption and sanctification of the individual soul, and that the church is to be valued only in so far as it is a means to this end,—a doctrine which we do not recollect to have ever heard questioned. The *place* of the church is, therefore, below the individual, and being only the effect of the operation of Christianity in the hearts of individuals, as the writer tells us further on, its importance must consist solely in the reaction of the example of Christians on those not yet converted, and in the aid and encouragement union among professed Christians gives to one another in their strivings after the Christian life. This, as near as we can come at it, is the *Christian Examiner's* doctrine.

The writer throws in one or two remarks, in connexion with his general statement, to which we cannot assent. "It has been maintained," he says, "that the church is the principal idea in the Gospel. It has been *generally* supposed that the individual exists for the church. Ecclesiastical writers have contended, and the people have admitted, that the rights of the church were stronger than the rights of the members, that the prosperity of the church must be secured at the expense of the believer's peace and independence; that, in a word every thing must be made to yield to the church."—

p. 80. The writer must have drawn on his imagination for his facts. Ecclesiastical writers have never contended, nor have the people admitted, any such thing. The doctors of the church have always and uniformly taught the church exists for the individual, not the individual for the church, and that she is to be submitted to solely as the means in the hands of God for redeeming and sanctifying the individual soul. This is wherefore Catholics so earnestly contend for the church, so willingly obey her commands, and so cheerfully lay down their lives in her defence.

The question of a conflict of rights between the church and the individual, which the *Christian Examiner* regards as *the* great question of the age, is no question at all; for there never is and never can be a conflict of rights. It has never been held by any one of any authority in the ecclesiastical world, that the *rights* of the church are stronger than the *rights* of the members, and that the rights of the members must yield to those of the church. Rights never yield; claims may yield, but not rights. Establish the fact that this or that is the right of the member, and the church both respects and guaranties it; but where she has the right to teach and command, she does not come in conflict with individual rights by demanding submission, for there the individual has no rights. To hold him, within the province of the church, to obedience, is only holding him to obedience to the rightful authority. When the law says to the individual, "Thou shalt not steal," it infringes no right; because the individual has not, and never had, any right to steal.

But passing over this, we say, the *Christian Examiner* holds, that, in the usual sense of the term, our blessed Saviour founded no church; he merely taught the truth, and, by his teaching, life, sufferings, death, and resurrection, deposited in the minds and hearts of men certain great seminal principles of truth and goodness, to be by their own free thought and affections developed and matured. The church is nothing but the mere effect of the development and growth of these principles. "It is but a consequence" of the effect of Christianity upon those who are "separately brought under its influence." These, taken collectively, are the church. These organize themselves in one way or another, adopt for their social regulation and mutual progress such forms of worship or internal discipline as are suggested by the measure of Christian truth and virtue realized in their hearts. This is all the church there is.

If you ask, What is its authority? the answer is, "A fiction, a fiction which has cheated millions and ruined multitudes, but a fiction still."—p. 83. This, in brief, is the church theory of *Liberal* Christians, in fact, the theory virtually adopted by the great body of the Protestant world, and the only theory a consistent Protestant can adopt, if not even more than he can consistently adopt.

The insufficiency of this theory it is our purpose in the following essay to point out, by showing that with it alone it is impossible to elicit an act of faith. We shall begin what we have to offer by defining what it is we mean by the church, and what are the precisé questions at issue between us and no-churchmen. We do this, because the *Christian Examiner* and its associates do not seem to have any clear or definite notions of what it is we contend for, when we contend for the authority, infallibility, and indefectibility of the church, or what it is of which we really predicate these important attributes.

The word *church*, it is well known, is used in a variety of senses. The Greek ἐκκλησία, *ecclesia*, rendered by the word *church*, taken in a general way, means an assembly, or congregation, whether good or bad, for one purpose or another; but is for the most part taken in the Scriptures and the fathers in a good sense, for the Church of Christ. The English word *church*, said to be derived from Κύριος and οἶκος, *the Lord's house* would seem to designate primarily the place of worship; but as οἶκος, like our English word *house*, may mean the family as well as the dwelling or habitation, the word *church* may not improperly be used to designate the Lord's family, the worshippers as well as the place of worship; in which sense it is a sufficiently accurate translation of the Greek ἐκκλησία, as generally used by ecclesiastical writers.

1. By the church we understand, then, when taken in its widest sense, without any limitation of space or time, the whole of the Lord's family, the whole congregation of the faithful, united in the true worship of God under Christ the head. In this sense it comprehends the faithful of the Old Testament,—not only those belonging to the synagogue, but also those out of it, as Job, Melchisedech, &c.,—the blest, even the angels, in heaven, the suffering in purgatory, and those on the way. As comprehending the blest in heaven, it is called the Church Triumphant; the souls in purgatory, the Church Suffering; believers on the way, the

Church Militant; not that these are three different churches, but different parts, or rather states, of one and the same church. But with the church in this comprehensive sense we have in our present discussion nothing to do. The question obviously turns on the Church Militant.

2. The Church Militant is defined by Catholic writers to be "The society of the faithful, baptized in the profession of the same faith, united in the participation of the same sacraments, and in the same worship, under one head, Christ in heaven, and his vicar, the sovereign pontiff, on earth." But even this is too comprehensive for our present purpose,—to indicate at once the precise points in the controversy between us and no-churchmen.

3. We must distinguish, in the Church Militant, between the *Ecclesia credens*, the congregation of the faithful, and the *Ecclesia docens*, or congregation of pastors and teachers.

The church, as the simple congregation of believers, taken exclusively as *believers*, is not a visible organization, nor an authoritative or an infallible body. On this point we have no controversy with the *Christian Examiner;* for we are no Congregationalists, and by no means disposed to maintain that the supreme authority in the church, under Christ, is vested in the body of the faithful. The authority of the church in this sense we cheerfully admit is "a fiction," "a mischievous fiction," as the history of Protestantism for these three hundred years of its existence sufficiently establishes.

When we contend for the church as a visible, authoritative, infallible, and indefectible body or corporation, we take the word *church* in a restricted sense, to mean simply the body of pastors and teachers, or, in other words, the bishops in communion with their chief. We mean what Protestants would, perhaps, better understand by the word *ministry* than by the word *church*,—although this word *ministry* is far from being exact, as it designates functions rather than functionaries, and, when used to designate functionaries, includes the several orders of the Christian priesthood,—not merely the bishops or pastors, who alone, according to the Catholic view, constitute the *Ecclesia docens*. Nevertheless, to avoid the confusion the word *church* is apt to generate in Protestant minds, we shall sometimes use it, merely premising that we use it to express only the body of pastors and teachers, by whom we understand exclusively the bishops, in communion with their chief, the pope.

Now, the question between us and no-churchmen turns precisely on this *Ecclesia docens*. Has our blessed Saviour established a body of teachers for his church, that is, for the congregation of the faithful? Has he given them authority to teach and govern? Has he given to this body the promise of infallibility and indefectibility? If so, which of the pretended Christian ministries now extant is this body? These are the questions between us and no-churchmen, and they cover the whole ground in controversy. There is now no mistaking the points to be discussed.

I. We take it for granted that the writer in the *Christian Examiner* admits, or intends to admit, the divine origin and authority of the Christian religion, and that the name of Jesus is the only name "given under heaven among men whereby we must be saved." We shall take it for granted that he holds the Christian religion to be, not merely preferable to all other religions or pretended religions, but the only true religion and way of salvation. We are bound to do so, for he is a doctor of divinity, a professedly Christian pastor of a professedly Christian congregation, and it would be discourteous on our part to reason with him as we should with a Jew, Pagan, Mahometan, or Infidel. We are bound to assume that he holds, or at least intends to hold, that the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ is the only law of life, without obedience to which no one can be saved; and, since he makes Christianity and the church co-extensive, that out of the pale of the church *as he defines it*, there is no salvation. The church, he says, comprehends and is composed of all the followers of Christ. No one, then, who is not in the church is a follower of Christ. If the Gospel of Christ be the only law of life, no one not a follower of Christ can be saved. Consequently, no one not a member of the church of Christ can be saved.

To deny this is to reject Christianity altogether, or to fall into complete indifferency. If men can be saved, or be acceptable to their Maker, in one religion as well as in another, wherein is one preferable to another? If the Christian revelation was not necessary to our salvation, why was it given us, and why are we called upon to believe and obey it? why did God send his only begotten Son to make it, and why was it declared to be of such inestimable value to us? If Jesus Christ taught that salvation is attainable in all religions, or in any religion but his own, why were the

apostles so enraptured with the Gospel, and why did they make such painful sacrifices for its promulgation? If they had not been taught to regard it as the only way of salvation, their conduct is unaccountable; and if it be not the only way of salvation, they and their Master can be regarded only as a company of deluded fanatics, whose labors, sacrifices, and cruel deaths may indeed excite our pity, but cannot command our respect. We shall presume the writer in the *Christian Examiner* sees all this as well as we, and therefore shall presume that he holds with us, that all mankind are bound to worship God, that there is but one true way of worshipping God, and therefore but one true religion, and that this true religion is the Christian religion. He who does not admit this much can by no allowable stretch of courtesy be called a Christian. This premised, we proceed.

In order to be saved, to enter into life, or to become acceptable to God, one must be a Christian. To be a Christian, one must be a *believer*. No one is a Christian who is not a follower of Christ. Every follower of Christ, according to the *Christian Examiner*, is a member of the church of Christ. But, according to the same authority, the church is a company of *believers*. Therefore a Christian must be a believer. He who is a believer is a believer because he believes something. Therefore, in order to be a Christian, it is necessary to believe something.

The *Christian Examiner* must admit this conclusion; yet some Unitarians have the appearance of denying it. A short time since, we read an article in a Unitarian newspaper, written by a distinguished Unitarian clergyman, in which the writer maintains, that, although faith is indispensable to the Christian character, belief is not; yet he fails to define what that faith is which excludes or does not include belief. The late Dr. Channing, in his *Discourse on the Church*, objects to all forms, creeds, and churches, and declares that the essence of all religion is in supreme love to God and universal justice and charity towards our neighbour. Yet we presume he wishes this fact, to wit, that this is the essence of all religion, should be assented to both by the will and the understanding. But this is not a fact of science, evident in and of itself. It depends on other facts which are matters of belief, and therefore must itself be an object of belief. Not a few Unitarian clergymen of our acquaintance understand by faith *trust* or *con-*

fidence (*fiducia*), and contend, that, when we are commanded to *believe* in Christ, in God, &c., the meaning is, that we should *trust* or *confide* in him. To believe in the Son is to confide in him as the Son of God. But we cannot confide in him as the Son of God, unless we believe that he is the Son of God; we cannot confide in God, unless we believe that he is, and that he is the protector of them that trust him. Where there is no belief, there is and can be no confidence. Confidence always presupposes faith; for where there is no belief that the trust reposed will be responded to, there is no trust; and the fact, that the one trusted will preserve and not betray the trust, is necessarily a matter of faith, of belief, not of knowledge. Faith begets confidence, but is not it; confidence is the effect or concomitant of faith, but can never exist without it. So, however these may seem to deny the necessity of belief, they all in reality imply it, presuppose it.

Moreover, all Unitarians hold, that, to be a Christian, one must be a follower of Christ. Their radical conception of Christ is that of a teacher, of a person specially raised up and commissioned by Almighty God to teach, and to teach the truth. But one cannot be said to be the follower of a teacher, unless he believes what the teacher teaches. Therefore, to be a Christian, one must be a believer.

This, again, is evident from the Holy Scriptures. "For without faith," says the blessed Apostle Paul, "it is impossible to please God." Heb. xi. 6. So our blessed Saviour: "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be condemned." St. Mark, xvi. 16. "He that believeth in the Son hath eternal life; but he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him." St. John, iii. 36. This is sufficient to establish our first positon, namely, that, in order to be a Christian, it is necessary to be a believer, that is, to believe *somewhat.*

This *somewhat*, which it is necessary to believe, is not falsehood, but truth. What we are required to believe is that for not believing which we shall be condemned. But God is a God of truth, nay, truth itself, and it is repugnant to reason to assume that he will condemn us for not believing falsehood. The belief demanded is also essential to our salvation; for it is said, "He that believeth not shall be condemned." But it is equally repugnant to reason to maintain that a God of truth, who is truth, can make belief in false-

hood essential to salvation. Therefore the belief demanded, as to its object, is truth, not falsehood.

The truth we are required to believe is the revelation which Almighty God has made us through his Son, Jesus Christ, or in other words, the truth which Jesus Christ taught or revealed. The belief in question is *Christian* belief, that which makes one a Christian believer, a follower of Jesus, a member of the "uncounted and wide-spread congregation of all those who receive the Gospel as the law of life." But one can be a *Christian* believer only by believing Christian truth; and Christian truth can be no other truth, if different truths there be, than that taught by Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ, according to the confession of Unitarians themselves, was a teacher of truth, and a teacher of nothing but truth. Then all he taught was truth. Therefore, to be truly a Christian believer, truly a follower of Christ, it is necessary to believe, explicitly or implicitly, *all* the truth he taught. Hence, the commission to the apostles was to teach all nations, and to teach them to observe *all things whatsoever* their Master had commanded them. St. Matt. xxviii. 20.

The truth which Jesus Christ taught or revealed appertains, in part, at least, to the *supernatural* order. By the supernatural order we understand the order above nature, that is, above the order of creation. All creatures, whether brute matter, vegetables, animals, men, or angels, are in God, and without him could neither be, live, nor move. But God has created them all "after their kinds," and each with a specific nature. What is included in this nature, or promised by it, although having its origin and first motion in God, is what is meant by *natural*. Supernatural is something above this, and superadded. God transcends nature, and is supernatural; but regarded solely as the author, upholder, and governor of nature, he is natural, and hence the knowledge of him as such is always termed *natural theology*. But as the author of grace, he is strictly supernatural; because grace, though having the same origin, is above the order of creation, is not included in it, nor promised by it. It is, so to speak, an excess of the divine fulness not exhausted in creation, but reserved to be superadded to it according to the divine will and pleasure. Thus God may be said to be both natural and supernatural. As natural, that is, as the author, sustainer, and governor of nature, he is naturally intelligible, according to what Saint Paul tells

us, Rom. i. 20. "For the invisible things of God, even his eternal power and divinity, from the creation of the world, are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made." But as supernatural, that is, as the author of grace, he is not naturally intelligible, and can be known only as supernaturally revealed. The fact that he is the author of grace, or that there is grace, is not a fact of natural reason, or intrinsically evident to natural reason. It, therefore, is not and cannot be a matter of science, but must be a matter of faith. Hence, the apostle says again, Heb. xi. 6: "He that cometh to God must *believe* that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that seek him." That he is as author of nature, we *know*, but that he is as author of grace, or that he is a rewarder of them that seek him, we *believe*.

Now, the revelation of Jesus Christ is preëminently the revelation of God as the author and dispenser of grace, and therefore preëminently the revelation of the supernatural. "The law was given by Moses, but grace and truth by Jesus Christ." St. John, i. 17. Hence, to believe the truth and all the truth which Christ taught is to believe truth pertaining to the supernatural order.

Unitarians, it is true, eliminate from the Gospel a great part of the mysteries, and reduce it, so to speak, to a mere republication of the law of nature; their theology is in the main natural theology; their faith in God is in him as the author of nature, and the immortality they look for is merely a natural immortality; but the sounder part of them, do, nevertheless, to some extent, admit that Jesus Christ revealed truths not naturally intelligible, and which pertain to the supernatural order. They admit that the Gospel is itself, in some sense, a revelation of grace, and therefore a revelation of the supernatural. They also admit the necessity, in order to be Christian believers, of believing in several particular things which pertain to the supernatural order. Among these we may instance remission of sins, the resurrection of the dead, and final beatitude, or the heavenly reward. We are not aware that they question these; and we are sure no one can question them without losing all right to the Christian name. But these all pertain to the supernatural order.

Remission of sin, whatever else it may mean, means at least, remission of the penalty which God has annexed to transgression. The penalty is annexed by God either as author and sovereign of nature, or as supernatural. If by God

as supernatural, the penalty must itself be supernatural; and therefore he who believes in its remission must believe in the supernatural, for no man can believe in the remission of a penalty which he does not believe to have been annexed. If God annexes the penalty as author and sovereign of nature, its *remission* must be supernatural. To assume that the order of nature remits it, is to assume nature to be in contradiction with herself, or to deny the remission by denying the existence of any penalty to remit. Where the remission begins, there ends the penalty. If the remission be in the order of nature, then the order of nature imposes no penalty beyond the point where the remission begins; and then there is no remission, for nothing is remitted. To say that God as author and sovereign of nature remits what in the same character he imposes is to assume that he imposes no penalty that goes further than the commencement of the remission. Then, in fact, no remission. The penalty, in this case, would be exhausted, not remitted. Remission, then, must be by God as supernatural, not as natural; not as author and sovereign of nature, but as author and dispenser of grace. Remission is necessarily an act of grace, and therefore supernatural. Then, whatever view be taken of the penalty itself, he who believes in its remission must believe in the supernatural order.

So of the resurrection of the dead. We do not mean to say that by natural reason we cannot demonstrate a future continued existence, but that a fact answering to the term *resurrection* is naturally neither cognoscible nor demonstrable. Resurrection means rising again, and evidently pertains, not to the soul, which never dies, but to the body, and implies that the same body which died is raised; for if not, it would not be a *re*-surrection, but a simple *surrection*, or perhaps new creation. Now, by no natural light we possess can we come to the knowledge of the fact that our bodies shall rise again. Yet we are undeniably taught in the Gospel that such is the fact.

Moreover, the Apostle Paul tells us that the body shall not only be raised, but it shall be raised in a supernatural condition. "It is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body." It is to be made like to our blessed Saviour's glorious body. But a glorified body does not pertain to the order of nature; because the natural body it is said, is to be "*made* like to the body of his glory," which implies that it must be changed from its natural to a supernatural condi-

tion, before it is a glorified body. But by what natural powers we possess do we arrive at the fact that there are glorified bodies, much more, that our vile bodies shall be changed into glorified bodies? And by what process of reasoning, not dependent for its *data* on the revelation, can we, now we are told it shall be so, prove that it will be so?

So, again, as to our final destiny. The truth we are to believe pertains to the supernatural order. St. Peter says, "By whom (Jesus Christ) he hath given us very great and precious promises, that by these you may be made partakers of the divine nature." 2 Pet. i. 4. That this is to partake of the divine nature in a supernatural sense, and not in the sense in which we naturally partake of it, in being made to the image and likeness of God, is evident from the fact that the Apostle calls it a *gift*, and says it is that which is *promised*. What pertains to nature is not a *gift*, and what is already possessed cannot be said to be something *promised*. Therefore the participation of the divine nature in question is not a natural, but a supernatural, participation. The blessed Apostle John tells us, "We are now the sons of God, and it hath not yet appeared what we shall be. We know that when he shall appear we shall be like him, because we shall see him as he is." 1 John iii. 2. Here it is asserted that we are to be something more than sons of God in the sense we now are; for we know not, even being sons of God, what we shall be. But this we do know, that when he shall appear we shall be *like him*. But this likeness is supernatural, not that to which we were created; otherwise it would be a likeness *possessed*, not *to be* possessed. How by the light of nature learn this fact, that we are to become like God, partakers of the divine nature, in a supernatural sense? Again, the blessed apostle in the same passage says, "We shall be like him, because we shall see him as he is." So St. Paul, 1 Cor. xiii. 12: "Now we see through a glass, darkly, but then face to face; now I know in part, but then I shall know even as I am known." The fact here asserted, to wit, that our future destiny is the beatific vision, that is, to see God as he is, and to know him even as we ourselves are known, is not naturally intelligible, nor demonstrable by natural reason. Moreover, to see God as he is exceeds our nature; for naturally we cannot see God as he is, that is, as he is in himself. The destiny, then, which the Gospel reveals for them that love the Lord is supernatural. For "It is written, The eye hath not not seen, ear heard, neither hath

it entered into the heart of man, what things God hath prepared for them that love him." 1 Cor. ii. 9. Therefore, to believe the Gospel, or the truth which Jesus Christ taught, it is necessary to believe not only truth supernaturally communicated, but truth pertaining to the supernatural order. But we have already proved that it is necessary to salvation to believe *the* truth and *all* the truth which Jesus taught. Therefore it is necessary to believe truth which pertains to the supernatural order.

The result thus far is, that, in order to be Christians, to be saved, to enter into life, to secure the rewards of heaven, it is necessary to believe the truth which Jesus Christ taught, and that we cannot believe this without believing in that which is supernatural, and supernatural both as to the mode of communication and as to the matter communicated. The truth which Jesus Christ taught is, in general terms, the Gospel, or Christian revelation; and the Christian revelation is a supernatural revelation, and, in part at least, a revelation of the supernatural. This revelation and its contents we must believe, or resign our pretensions to the Christian name. To believe this revelation and its contents is not, we admit, all that is requisite to the Christian character—far from it; for there remain beside, faith, hope and charity, and the greatest is charity. Moreover, faith alone is insufficient to justify us in the sight of God; for faith without works is dead, and therefore inoperative. Nevertheless, faith is indispensable. "For without faith it is impossible to please God," and "He that believeth not shall be condemned." This much we conceive we have established; and this much, we presume, the *Christian Examiner* will concede.

II. Faith or belief, as distinguished from knowledge and science, rests on authority extrinsic both to the believer and the matter believed. In it there is always assent to something proposed *ab extra*. That the sun is now shining, we know by our own senses; it is therefore a fact of knowledge; that the three angles of a triangle are equal to two right angles, which we know not intuitively, but discursively, is a fact of science. The first we know immediately; the second we can demonstrate from what it contains in itself. But in belief the case is different. The matter assented to is neither intuitively certain, nor intrinsically evident. We are told there is such a city as Rome, which we have never seen. Having ourselves never seen Rome, we have no intuitive

evidence that there is such a city. The proposition that there is such a city is not intrinsically evident—contains nothing in itself from which we can demonstrate its truth. Its truth, then, can be established to us only by evidence extrinsic both to ourselves and to the proposition, that is, by *testimony*. That there is a God is a fact of knowledge; for if it be said that we do not know it intuitively, we know it at least discursively, since from the creation of the world, even the invisible things of God are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, as says St. Paul, Rom. i. 20. But that God has destined them that love him to the beatific vision is not a fact of knowledge, or of science; for it is neither intuitively certain, nor internally demonstrable. It may be true; but whether so or not can be determined only by testimony, that is, evidence extrinsic both to the proposition and to ourselves. Hence St. Paul says, Heb. xi. 1, "Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things that appear not;" and St. Augustine, "Faith is to believe what you see not."—Tract. 40 in Joan.

There may be matters contained in the Christian revelation which are matters of knowledge or of science, but we are concerned with it now only so far as it is a matter of faith. As a matter of faith, its truth rests solely on extrinsic evidence, or testimony. We cannot, then, as reasonable beings, believe it, unless we have some extrinsic authority competent to vouch for its truth, or some witness whose testimony is credible. But as an object of faith, the Christian revelation, in part at least, is a revelation of the supernatural. Now, this which is supernatural cannot be adequately witnessed to or vouched for by any natural witness or authority. No witness is competent to testify to that which he does not or cannot himself know, either intuitively or discursively. But no natural being, how high soever in the scale of being he may be exalted, can know either intuitively or discursively the truth of that which, as to its matter, is supernatural. The only adequate authority for the supernatural is the supernatural itself, that is, God. For though angels or divinely inspired men may declare the supernatural to us, yet they themselves are not witnesses to its intrinsic truth, and have no ground for believing its truth but the veracity of God revealing it to them. They may be competent witnesses to the fact of the revelation, but not to the truth of the matter revealed. The authority or ground for believing the supernatural matter revealed is, then, the veracity of

God, and we cannot reasonably or prudently believe any proposition involving the supernatural on other authority. We have no sufficient ground for faith in such matters, unless we have the clear, express testimony of God himself. But the testimony of God is sufficient for any proposition, *in case we have it;* because enough is *clearly seen* of God, from the creation of the world, being understood by the things that are made, to establish on a scientific basis the fact that he can neither deceive nor be deceived; for we can demonstrate scientifically, from principles furnished by the light of natural reason, that God is infinitely wise and good, and no being infinitely wise and good can deceive or be deceived. God is the first truth—*prima veritas*—in being, in knowing, and in speaking, and therefore whatever he declares to be true must necessarily and infallibly be true. Nothing, then, is more reasonable than to believe God on his word or simple veracity ; for it is no more than to believe that infinite and perfect truth, truth itself, cannot lie. Whatever God has revealed must be true. Even the *Christian Examiner* would admit the doctrine of the Trinity, if it were proved to be a doctrine of divine revelation. The witness, ground, or authority for believing the supernatural is the veracity of God, and this all will admit to be sufficient, if we have it ; and none will admit, if they understand themselves, that a lower authority is sufficient.

But, although the veracity of God is the ground or authority on which we assent to the matter revealed, yet we cannot believe without sufficient evidence of the fact of revelation, or, in other words, without a witness competent to testify to the fact that God has actually revealed the matter in question,—made the particular revelation to which assent is demanded. The *Christian Examiner* is Unitarian, but it will tell us that it ought to believe the doctrine of the Trinity, if God has revealed it. Yet it demands, very properly, evidence of the fact that God has revealed it or declared its truth. Reasonable or a well grounded belief in the supernatural, then, requires two witnesses, two vouchers ; one to the truth of the matter revealed, which is the veracity of God revealing it ; the other to the fact of the revelation, or that the matter in question has actually been divinely revealed.

The revelation is made to intelligent beings, and must therefore consist in intelligible propositions. We do not mean that the truths revealed should be comprehensible ; for

every supernatural truth, as to its matter, must be wholly incomprehensible to natural reason; but that the propositions to be believed must be intelligible. What is present to the mind, in believing the revelation, are these propositions, which convey the truth, but in an obscure manner, to the understanding. If we should mistake the propositions actually contained in God's revelation, or substitute others therefor, since it is only through them that we arrive at the matter revealed, we should not believe the revelation which God has actually made, but something else, and something else for which we cannot plead the veracity of God, and therefore something for which we have no solid ground of faith. Suppose you adduce a book which you say contains the revelation God has made, and suppose you bring ample vouchers for the fact that it really does contain such revelation. In this case we should have sufficient ground for believing the book to contain the word of God; but before we should believe the word of God itself, we must believe the contents of the book in their *genuine sense*. We must have, then, some authority, extrinsic or intrinsic, competent to declare what is this genuine sense. What we believe is what is present to our mind when we believe. What is present to our mind is the interpretation or meaning we give to God's word. If this interpretation or meaning be not the *genuine sense*, we do not, as we have said, believe God's word, but something else. Faith in the supernatural requires, then, in addition to the witness that vouches for the fact that God has made the revelation, an interpreter competent to declare the true meaning of the revelation.

The faith we are required to have is equally required of all men. It is said, *qui non crediderit*,—that is, any one, without any limitation, who believeth not, shall be condemned. Then there must be no limitation of the essential conditions of faith. Then the witness for the faith, and the interpreter of God's word, must be present in all nations, and subsist through all ages,—catholic in space and time. We who live in this country at the present day need them just as much and in the same sense as the Jews did in the age of the apostles.

The witness to the fact of the revelation, and the interpreter of the word, must not only subsist through all ages and nations, but must be *unmistakable;* and unmistakable not only by a few philosophers, scholars, and men of parts and leisure, but by the poor, the busy, the weak, the ignorant, the illiter-

ate; for all these are equally commanded to believe, and have a right to have a solid ground of belief, which they cannot have if they may, with ordinary prudence, mistake the true witness and interpreter, and call in a false witness and a misinterpreter.

The witness and interpreter must be infallible; for, if fallible, it may call that God's word which is not his word, and assign a meaning to God's word itself which is not the genuine meaning. We may, then, be deceived, and think we are believing God's word when we are not. But where there is a possibility of deception, there is room for doubt, and where there is room for doubt, there is no faith; for the property of faith is to exclude doubt. The apostle says, "I know in whom I believe, and am certain," and whoever cannot say as much has not yet elicited an act of faith. Faith is a theological virtue, which consists in believing, explicitly or implicitly, all the truths God has revealed, without doubting, on the veracity of God alone. It requires absolute certainty, objective as well as subjective. Where there is belief without sufficient objective certainty the belief is not faith but mere opinion or persuasion. Mere subjective certainty, that is, an inward persuasion, even though it should exclude all actual doubt, would not be faith, unless warranted by evidence in which reason can detect no deficiency. It is a blind prejudice, and would vanish before the light of intelligence. A man may fancy that his head is set on wrong side before, and be so firmly persuaded of it that no reasoning can convince him to the contrary; but his internal persuasion is not faith. For faith is primarily, though not exclusively, an act of the understanding, and must be reasonable, and he who has it must have a solid reason to assign for it. The man has not faith, if he doubts, or may reasonably doubt; and he may reasonably doubt, if the evidence is not sufficient. He who has for his faith only the testimony of a fallible witness, that may both deceive and be deceived, has always a reasonable ground for doubt, and consequently no solid ground for faith. If he reasons at all on the testimony, if he opens his eyes at all to his liability to be deceived, he cannot, however earnestly he may try to believe, avoid doubting. Therefore, since, with a fallible witness, or fallible interpreter, we can never be sure that we are not mistaken, it necessarily follows, if we are to have faith at all, that we must have a witness and interpreter that cannot err, that is, infallible.

We sum up again by saying, that it is necessary to believe the truth Jesus Christ revealed, or, in other words, the Christian revelation; that to believe this is to believe truths which pertain to the supernatural order; and that, to have a solid ground for believing truths pertaining to the supernatural order, we must have, 1. The word or veracity of God; 2. A witness to the fact of revelation, and an interpreter of the genuine sense of what God has revealed, infallible and subsisting through all ages and nations, and, with ordinary prudence, unmistakable by even the simple and unlearned. The first the *Christian Examiner* will not deny us. We proceed to prove the second.

III. There must be such a witness and interpreter, or, in other words, some infallible means of determining what is the word of God, because God has made belief of his word the essential condition of salvation. We know from natural theology, that is, from what is evident to us of God by natural reason, that he is, that he is just, and that he would not be just, should he make faith the essential condition of salvation, and not provide the necessary conditions of faith. He has made faith the condition of salvation, as we have proved, and as the *Christian Examiner* must admit, unless it chooses to deny the Christian revelation altogether. But the infallible witness and interpreter alleged is a necessary condition of faith, as we have shown from the nature of faith itself. Therefore, God, since he is just and cannot belie himself, *has* provided us with the witness and interpreter required, or, what is the same thing, some infallible means of determining what is the word he commands us to believe.

There is, then, the witness and interpreter of God's word in question. Who or what is it? To this question four answers may be returned:—1. Reason; 2. The Bible; 3. Private Illumination; 4. The Apostolic Ministry, or the church teaching.

1. Reason may be taken in two senses:—1. The intellective faculty, as distinguished from the sensitive faculty; 2. The discursive or reasoning faculty. In the first sense, it is the faculty of knowing intuitively, and is the principle of *knowledge*, in distinction from what is technically termed *science*. In this sense, reason, in order to answer our purpose, to serve as the witness and interpreter proved to be necessary, must be able either to know God intuitively, or to apprehend intuitively the intrinsic truth of his word.

Reason must see God face to face, know intuitively that it is God who speaks; or it cannot testify, on its *own* knowledge, to the fact that the speaker alleged is God. But reason cannot see God thus face to face. We have and can have no intuitive knowledge of God in this sense. Reason cannot be the witness on the ground of its intuitive apprehension of God, nor can it be on the ground of its intuitive perception or apprehension of the intrinsic truth of the matter revealed. Our natural reason or power of knowing cannot extend beyond the bounds of nature. But the matter revealed, or the truths to be believed, are supernatural, and therefore transcend the reach of the natural intellect. If the natural intellect could attain to them, they would be, not supernatural, but natural. Moreover, if the intrinsic truth of the revelation could be apprehended, intuitively known, it would be, not a matter of faith, but of knowledge; for faith is, to believe what is not seen, *argumentum non apparentium*. Heb. xi. 1. But it is a matter of faith, as already proved, and therefore not of knowledge. Therefore reason cannot apprehend the intrinsic truth of the revelation, and from the intrinsic truth know it to have been divinely revealed. Therefore reason, as the simple intellective faculty, or power of intuition, cannot be the witness.

Reason, in the second sense, is discursive, the subjective principle of science, in distinction from intuitive knowledge, —the faculty of deducing conclusions from given premises. If the premises are true, the conclusions are valid. But reason cannot furnish its own premises. They must be *given* it; hence, they are called *data*. These *data* must be furnished either by intuition, or by faith. But in the case before us they can be furnished by neither;—not by intuition, as we have just proved; and not by faith, because faith is the matter to be determined.

Proof by reason, in the sense we now use the term, is called demonstration. The position assumed, when it is alleged that the discursive reason is the witness of the fact of revelation, is, that reason can find in the internal character of the revelation itself, or what purports to be a revelation, the *data* from which it can demonstrate that it is actually the word of God. But this is possible only on condition that reason, independently of all revelation, be in possession of so perfect a knowledge of God as to be able to say *a priori* what a revelation from God will and necessarily must be. But this is inadmissible; 1. Because it would

imply that the revelation is intrinsically evident to natural reason, and therefore that it is an object of science and not of faith; and 2. Because the revelation is of God as supernatural, and reason can know God as supernatural, only through the medium of supernatural revelation itself. The knowledge which reason has of God prior to the revelation is simply what is contained in natural theology that is, knowledge of God simply as author, sustainer, and sovereign of nature. From this it is, indeed, possible to obtain *data* from which we may conclude, within certain limits, what a supernatural revelation cannot be, but not what it must be. God, whether as author of nature, or as author and dispenser of grace, that is, as natural or as supernatural, intelligible or superintelligible, is one and the same being and therefore cannot in the one be in contradiction to what he is in the other. If, in what purports to be a revelation from him, we find that which contradicts what is clearly seen of him, from the creation of the world, through the things that are made, we have a right to pronounce it, *a priori* not his revelation. But beyond this reason cannot go; for it is not lawful to reason from nature to grace, from the natural to the supernatural, from *data* furnished by natural science to supernatural revelation. Reason, then, has no *data* from which it can conclude what is the revelation. Therefore it cannot be the witness demanded.

Moreover, if reason knew enough of God, independently of the supernatural revelation, to be able, from the intrinsic character of the revelation, to pronounce on its genuineness, not only negatively, but affirmatively, it would know all of God the revelation itself can teach. The revelation would then be superfluous,—in fact, no revelation at all; and the question of its genuineness would be an idle question, not worth considering. To assume the competency of reason, as the witness, would then be to deny the necessity of the revelation and its value, which, in fact, is what all our rationalists do, and probably wish to do.

But, in denying the competency of reason as the witness to the fact of the revelation, we do not deny the office of reason in determining whether a revelation has been made, nor that the fact of revelation is, can, and should be made evident to natural reason. We merely deny that it is *intrinsically* evident. It is not *in*trinsically evident, but *ex*trinsically evident; not internally *by* reason, but *to* reason by testimony; and of the credibility of the testimony, reason may, and should judge.

Three things must always be kept distinct in the question of supernatural revelation: 1. The ground of faith in the truths revealed; 2. The authority on which we take the fact of revelation; 3. The credibility of this authority. The first, as we have seen, is the veracity of God, and is sufficient, because God is the ultimate truth in being, in knowing, and in speaking, and therefore can neither deceive nor be deceived. The second we are seeking, and it is not a witness to the truth of the matter revealed, but to the fact that God reveals it, and can be competent only on condition of being itself supernatural or supernaturally enlightened. The third is the credibility of the witness to the fact of revelation, and must be evidenced to natural reason; or there will be an impassible gulf between reason and faith, and therefore no faith.

The fact of revelation we shall show in its proper place, may be evidenced to natural reason through the credibility of the witness, and therefore, that faith is possible. But because reason is competent to judge of the credibility of the witness, we must not conclude that it is itself a competent witness to the fact of revelation. This conceded, the first answer is inadmissible, for the fact of revelation is neither intuitive nor demonstrable.

2. The answer just dismissed is that of the rationalists, and is, in one of its forms, substantially the one which we ourselves gave in all we preached and wrote on the subject while associated with the Unitarians. The second answer is the Protestant answer, and the one, if we understand him, adopted by the writer in the *Christian Examiner*. This assumes that the Bible is the witness; that is, the Bible interpreted by the private reason of the believer, availing himself of such aids, philological, critical, historical, &c., as may be within his reach. But this answer cannot be accepted, because, without an infallible authority independent of the Bible, it is impossible, 1. To settle the canon; 2. To establish the sufficiency of the Scriptures; 3. To determine their genuine sense.

The Bible can be adduced as the witness only in the character of an authentic record of the revelation actually made; for, according to its own confession, as we may find on examining it, it was not the original medium of the revelation itself. The revelation, according to the Bible itself, in part at least, was in the first instance orally published before it was committed to writing. This is

especially true of the Christian revelation, in so far as distinguished from the Jewish. It was communicated orally to the apostles, by our Lord, and by them orally to the public; and converts were made, and congregations of believers gathered, before one word of it was written. The writing was subsequent to the teaching and believing, and evidently, therefore, the primitive believers either believed without having any authority for believing, or had an authority for believing independent of written documents. To them what we term the Bible was not the witness. It, then, was not the original witness, or, as we have said, the original medium of the revelation. Its value, then, must consist entirely in the fact, that it faithfully records, in an authentic form, what was actually revealed. It is, then, only as a record that it can be adduced as evidence. But a record is no evidence till authenticated. It cannot authenticate itself; for, till authenticated, its testimony is inadmissible. It must be authenticated by some competent authority independent of itself. This authentication of the Bible as a record of the revelation made is what we call settling the canon.

Now, it is obvious, that, till the canon is settled, we have no authentic record, no Bible, to adduce. We may have a number of books bound up together, to which the printer has given the title of *The Bible;* but what we want is not the book called the Bible, but authentic records to which we may appeal as evidence; and if the book we call the Bible contains books which are not authentic records, or does not contain all that are, we cannot appeal to it as evidence; for we may, in the one case, take for revelation what is not revelation, and, in the other, leave out what is revelation. This is evident of itself. We must, then, settle the canon. But where is the authority to settle it?

The authority must be, 1. Independent of the Bible; 2. Infallible. But the advocates of the answer we are considering admit no infallible authority but that of the Bible itself. Therefore they have no authority by which to settle the canon, or to determine what is Bible or what is not Bible.

It will not do to say, the canon is all those books which have been received by the church as canonical; because the advocates of this answer deny the authority of the church, and stoutly contend that she may both deceive and be deceived. It will not do to appeal to tradition; for what

vouches for the inerrancy of tradition? And what right have Protestants to appeal to tradition, whose authority they do not admit, and which they contend may err and does err on many and the most vital points? Nor will it do to adduce the fathers; for they only establish what in their time was the tradition or belief of the church, by no means the intrinsic truth of that tradition or belief. Where, then, is the authority for se tling the canon?

There is no authority on Protestant principles, as is evident from the fact that Protestants have no canon. They all exclude from the canon established by the church several books which the church holds to be canonical. As to the remaining books, they dispute whether all are canonical or not. Luther rejects the Catholic Epistle of St. James, which he denominates "an epistle of straw," and also doubts the canonicity of several others. Mr. Andrews Norton, a learned and leading Unitarian, formerly a professor in the *Divinity School*, Cambridge, rejects pretty much the whole of the Old Testament, the Epistle to the Hebrews, the Epistles of James and Jude, the second of Peter, and the Apocalypse, in the New Testament, casts suspicion on the canonicity of all the Pauline Epistles, strikes out the first chapters of Matthew and Luke, and such portions of the remaining books as are demanded by the conveniences of his critical canons, or the exigencies of his dogmatic theology. Not a few of our Unitarians restrict the canon to the four Gospels. Several of the Germans strike from these the Gospel according to St. John; while Strauss, Baur, and Theodore Parker, regard the remaining Gospel narratives rather as a collection of anecdotes illustrating the notions of the early Christian believers, than as authentic histories of events which actually occurred; and the great body of liberal Christians, who are the Protestants of Protestants, agree that the Bible is so loosely written, is so filled with metaphor and oriental hyperbole, that no argument, especially no doctrine, can be safely built on single words, or even single sentences, however plain, positive, and uncontradicted, or unmodified by other portions of Scripture, their meaning may seem to be. It is evident from this statement of facts, that Protestants have no canon; that each private man is at liberty to settle the canon according to his own judgment or caprice; and therefore that they have no authentic record to adduce as evidence of the fact of revelation. They must agree among themselves what is

Bible, what is inspired Scripture, and authenticate the record, before they can legitimately introduce it as an infallible witness.

But pass over the difficulty of settling the canon; suppose the canon to be settled according to the decision of the church, and that, by an inconsistency which in the present case cannot be avoided, the authority of the church to settle the canon is conceded; still there remains the question of the *sufficiency* of the Scriptures. The record, however authentic it may be, can be evidence only for what is contained in it. If it does not contain the whole revelation, it is not evidence for the whole. If not evidence for the whole, it is not sufficient; for it is the *whole* revelation, not merely a part, to which the witness is needed to testify, since it is repugnant to the character of God to suppose that he should reveal any truth but for the purpose of having it believed.

That the Scriptures do contain the whole revelation is not to be presumed prior to proof; because they themselves testify that they are not, or at least only in part, the original medium of the revelation. If the revelation had been, in the first instance, made by writing, and by writing only, then, if we had the entire *written* word, we should have the right to conclude that we had the whole *revealed* word. But since a part of the revelation, to say the least, was communicated orally, taught and believed before the writing was commenced, we cannot conclude from the possession of the entire written word the possession of the entire revealed word, unless we have full evidence that the whole revealed word has been written. The fact of the sufficiency of the Scriptures is not, then, to be presumed from the fact of their canonicity. It is a fact to be proved, not taken for granted.

But this fact cannot be proved by tradition, by the authority of the church, or by the testimony of the fathers; for these all, on Protestant principles, are fallible, and not to be depended upon; and, moreover, they all testify against the fact in question. It cannot be proved by reason; because reason takes cognizance not of the fact of revelation, but simply of the motives of credibility. It must be proved by an authority above reason, and, as already established, by an authority which cannot err. But the Bible is asserted to be the only inerrable authority. Therefore it must be proved from the Bible itself. But

the Bible proves no such thing, for it nowhere professes to contain the whole revelation which has been made, but even indicates to the contrary. Therefore the sufficiency of the Scriptures cannot be proved, for the sufficiency of the Scriptures must mean that they are sufficient to teach not only the whole revelation of God, but the fact that they do teach the whole, since without this no one can know whether he has the faith God commands him to have, or not. But in failing to prove their sufficiency, they fail to prove this fact; therefore prove their own insufficiency.

It may be replied, that, though the Scriptures may not contain a full record of all that was revealed, they nevertheless contain all that is necessary to be believed in order to be saved. We reply, 1. That the command of God to us is not to believe the Bible or the written word, but the revelation which he has made; and therefore we are not to presume that we have the faith required, from the fact that we believe the whole written word, unless we have first established the fact that the written word is commensurate with the revealed word. 2. God, we know by natural reason, cannot reveal what he does not require to be believed; for the truth revealed while unbelieved, is as if unrevealed, and its revelation has no sufficient reason. But God cannot act without sufficient reason. No sufficient reason for the revelation of truth, but that it should be believed, can be conceived, or possibly exist. God reveals it that it should be believed. Then he requires it to be believed. No one can fail to do what God requires, without sin; because God cannot require what he does not make possible. If we cannot fail to believe what God has revealed, without sin, we cannot be saved without believing it. Therefore, it is necessary to salvation to believe all that God has revealed.

God cannot make a revelation and require us to believe it without making it so evident that we can have no intellectual reason for not believing it. Unbelief, then, must be the result of some perversity of the will, some moral repugnance, which withholds us from the consideration of the truth revealed, and blinds us as to the evidences of the fact of its revelation. But this perversity of will, this moral repugnance, is a sin, and as much so in the case of one truth revealed as in the case of another. Therefore it is necessary to believe all that God has revealed, in order to be saved. Therefore the Scriptures do not con-

tain all that it is necessary to believe for salvation, unless they contain all that God has revealed.

3. But waiving these considerations, it is either a fact that the Scriptures do contain all that is necessary to salvation, or it is not. If it be a fact, it is a fact which must be proved, and proved by a competent authority. The only competent authority, on Protestant principles, is the Bible itself. If the Bible asserts that it contains all that is necessary to be believed in order to be saved, then it may be conceded that it does. If it assert no such thing, then it does not. But the Bible nowhere asserts that it contains all that is necessary to be believed in order to be saved. Therefore, the Bible does not contain all that is necessary to be believed; for this fact itself, of the sufficiency of the faith it does contain, is itself essential to that sufficiency.

Finally, even admitting the Scriptures may contain the whole revelation, it is not possible by private reason alone to be infallibly certain of their genuine sense. To believe that the Scriptures contain the whole word of God is not to believe that word itself. It is merely believing them to be authoritative which is indeed something, and, in this age of infidelity, rationalism, and transcendentalism, no doubt a great deal; but is not the faith required. The command is not to believe that the Bible is an authentic record of the revelation, but to believe the truths revealed,—not the Bible, but what the Bible, rightly interpreted, teaches. The truths revealed are the object, the material object, of faith; and these evidently are not believed, unless the Bible be believed in its genuine sense, even assuming the Bible to contain them all.

We insist on this point, because it is one on which there are frequent and dangerous mistakes. The matter of faith is these revealed truths, which are fixed and unalterable, universal and permanent, and which must be carefully distinguished from our notions or apprehensions of them, which are dependent on our mental states or conditions, and change and fluctuate as we ourselves change or fluctuate. These notions are not the matter of faith, and to hold fast these is quite another thing from holding fast the truths themselves. If these notions, which are our interpretations or constructions of the truth, were the faith required, the faith would be one thing with one man, another thing with another, and one thing with the same man yesterday, another to-day, and perhaps still another

to-morrow. The true faith is an undoubting belief of the TRUTH, not what a man *thinks* to be the truth, but what really is truth; otherwise men could be saved so far as belief is necessary to salvation, under one form of belief as well as another, for there is probably no form of error which its adherents do not think is truth. Sincerity in the belief of error cannot be the substitute for Christian faith; for we have found that the faith which is the condition *sine qua non* of salvation is belief of truth and not falsehood, and of that very truth which Jesus Christ revealed. But this truth we do not believe, unless it lie in our interpretation as it lies in the mind of Jesus Christ himself. If it do not so lie, then we misinterpret it, and the misinterpretation of truth is not truth, and to believe this misinterpretation is to believe not the truth, but something else. If, then, we do not believe the revelation made in the Scriptures, in its genuine sense, in the sense intended by Almighty God, we do not believe the revelation at all.

Now, it is necessary not only that we seize, without any mistake, this genuine sense, but that we be infallibly certain that we have seized it. Even admitting that with nothing but private reason we could hit upon the genuine sense of Scripture, it would avail us nothing, unless we had this infallible certainty; because without this infallible certainty we cannot have faith. Will any man pretend that it is possible by private reason alone to be infallibly certain that we have the genuine sense of the Scriptures? We may, perhaps, *feel* certain; but this *feeling* certain is not faith. Faith is a firm, unwavering, and unwaverable conviction of the understanding, as well as a cheerful assent of the will. The mere feeling is worth nothing. Every enthusiast, every fanatic, has the feeling; but he who has nothing else is a mere reed shaken with the wind, or a wild beast let loose in society, as unacceptable to God as unprofitable to himself or dangerous to his associates. It is not this Almighty God demands of us, and it is not for the want of this that he places us under condemnation and suffers his wrath to abide upon us. No; we must have certainty, an intellectual certainty, certainty which the mind can grasp, and its hold of which all the craftiness of subtle sophists, all the allurements of the world, all the temptations of the flesh, and all the assaults of hell, cannot induce it for one moment to relax. We must have a faith which can be proof against all trials, come they from what quarter

they may; for our life is a warfare, an incessant warfare, and there come to all of us moments when nothing but a firm, fixed, and unalterable faith can sustain us,—moments when feeling, when the dearest affections of the heart, when all that can powerfully affect us as creatures of time and sense, conspire against us, and we must stand up against them and even against ourselves. O, in these terrible moments, in the sacred name of Christian charity, mock us not with a faith that melts away into mere feeling, and vanishes in mere fancy!

Now, it needs no words to prove that a faith which is not grounded on the word of God, who can neither deceive nor be deceived, will not answer our wants, will not be proof against the many "fiery trials" to which it must needs in this world be subjected. But we have no such faith merely because we have the Bible in our possession, nor because the Bible contains the word of God, nor because we read and study it and believe that we believe it. We have such a faith only on condition of knowing infallibly that what we take to be the meaning of the Bible is God's meaning; for the faith is belief of the truth as it is in Jesus, not as it is in us. We ask again, Can private reason give us this certainty?

This is a serious question, and one which the Protestant must answer, before he can have any solid reason for his faith. It will not do to call upon us to prove the negative; even if we could not prove that it is impossible from the Bible and private reason to become infallibly certain of the genuine sense of the word of God, it would not follow that we can from them obtain the infallible certainty without which there is no faith, and, if no faith, no salvation. He who affirms the proposition must prove it, not for the sake of meeting the logical conditions of his opponent's argument, for that is an affair of small moment; but for himself, for his own mind, to have in himself and for himself a well-grounded faith. Now, how will he prove this proposition, that from the Bible and private reason alone he can ascertain the genuine sense of the word of God, and know infallibly that he has that sense?

Will he prove this proposition from the Bible? He is bound by his own principles to do so; for this is his rule of faith, and his rule of faith should rest on divine authority. But he admits no divine authority except the Bible. Then he must prove it from the Bible, or admit that he has no sufficient authority for it. Can he prove it from the Bible?

Not in express terms, for the Bible in express terms does not assert it, as is well known. It can be proved from the Bible only by means of certain passages which are assumed to imply it. But whether these do imply it or not depends on the interpretation we give them. It can be proved from Scripture, then, only by a resort to interpretation. But the interpretation demands the application, the use of the rule, as the condition of establishing it. But how determine that the interpretation which authorizes the rule is not itself a misinterpretation, especially since it is an interpretation which is disputed? Can the rule be proved from reason? Not from reason, as the faculty of intuition; because the fact, that from the Bible and private reason alone we can infallibly determine what it is that God has actually revealed, is evidently not intuitively certain. From reason, as the principle of reasoning? From what *data* shall we conclude it? It may be said, that God is just, that he has made a revelation, commanded us to believe it, and made our belief of it the condition *sine qua non* of salvation; but he would not be just in so doing, if this revelation were not infallibly ascertainable in its genuine sense by the prudent exercise of natural reason. Ascertainable by natural reason *in some way*, we grant; but by private reason and the Bible alone, we deny; for God may have made the revelation ascertainable only by a divinely commissioned and supernaturally guided and protected body of teachers, and the office of natural reason to be to judge of the credibility of this body of teachers. From the fact that the revelation is addressed to reasonable beings, and is to be believed by such, and therefore must be made intelligible, it does not necessarily follow that it must be intelligible from the Scriptures and private reason alone. For this would imply that the Scriptures were intended to be the medium and the only medium through which God makes his revelation to men; the very question in dispute.

Can it be proved as a matter of fact, from experience? We have before us the history of Protestant sects for the last three hundred years. A three hundred years' experience ought to suffice to demonstrate the possibility of their ascertaining the sense of God's word, if it be thus ascertainable. Yet Protestants during this long period have done little but vary their interpretations, dispute, wrangle, divide, subdivide, and subsubdivide, on the question of what it is God has revealed. They are now split up into

some five or six hundred sects. There is not a single doctrine in which they all agree; not a single doctrine has been asserted by one that has not been denied by another. The writer in the *Christian Examiner* is a conscientious and devout Unitarian, and yet how large a portion of his Protestant brethren will not deem it an excess of courtesy to treat him and his associates as Christian believers? The Gospel according to Dr. Channing has very little affinity with the Gospel according to Dr. Beecher. Now, truth is one, and can admit of but one true interpretation. Of these many hundred Protestant interpretations, only one at most can be the true interpretation; all the rest are false interpretations, and their adherents are no true Christian believers. Can any Protestant say with infallible certainty that his interpretation is the true one? If not, how can he elicit an act of faith, how, if come to the use of reason, can he be a Christian?

The writer in the *Christian Examiner* makes very light of these different interpretations of the word of God, and thinks difference of interpretation can do no great harm, because, in his judgment, over it all "there may prevail a harmony of sentiment and a harmony of life." But he mistakes the end of unity of faith. Unity of faith is essential because truth is one, and there can be but one true faith, and without this true faith salvation is not possible. "Without faith it is impossible to please God." And this must needs be the true faith, not a false faith, which is no faith at all. Our Unitarian friend seems to imagine that what we are required to believe is, not the truth, but what we *think* to be the truth; that is, we are required to believe the truth not as it is in Jesus, but as it is in ourselves! Does he find any proof of this convenient doctrine in the Scripture? Can he adduce a "Thus saith the Lord" for it? If not, according to his own principles, it rests only on human authority, on which he does not allow us to believe; for he makes it the duty of the believer to stand up firm against all human dictation in matters of belief. In this he is right, and we must have higher authority than his, before we can consent to regard any man's constructions of the truth, unless we have infallible authority for believing them the true constructions, as the truth Almighty God commands us to believe, and without believing which, we must lie under his wrath and condemnation.

No argument can be drawn, it is evident, from experi-

ence, to prove that from the Bible and private reason alone we can determine with infallible certainty what is the revelation of God. So far as experience throws any light on the subject, it warrants the opposite conclusion, and makes it certain that without something else faith is out of the question. Protestants, in fact, have no faith; nay, so far from having any faith, nearly all of them deny its possibility. They have, as we have seen, no authority from the Bible, from reason, or from experience, for their rule of faith; and they cannot be such poor logicians as to infer that they can have faith by virtue of a rule which is not authorized. This is no doubt, a serious matter for them; for, ever must ring in their ears *sine fide impossibile est placere Deo,—qui non crediderit condemnabitur.* We must, then, either give up the possibility of faith, or seek some other than the Protestant answer to the question, Who or what is the witness to the fact of revelation?

3. The insufficiency of this answer has been felt even by Protestants themselves, and some of them have proposed a *third* answer, which we may denominate Private Illumination, because it is a revelation made for the special benefit of him who receives it, and not a revelation to be communicated by him for the faith or confirmation of the faith of others. It is contended for under various forms, but the more common form, and the one with which we are principally concerned in this discussion, is the Calvinistic, or what is usually denominated *Christian experience.* This concedes the defectiveness of the logical evidence of the fact of revelation, and pretends that it is supplied by a certain interior illumination from the Holy Ghost in the fact of regeneration, whereby the believer is enabled to know by his own experience the truth of the doctrine he believes or is required to believe. The famous Jonathan Edwards was a great advocate for this, and sets it forth with considerable ability in his *Treatise on the Affections*, and especially in a sermon on *The Reality of the Spiritual Light*, preached at Northampton in 1734. It is insisted on, we believe, by all the Protestant sects that claim to be *Evangelical.* Indeed, this, in their estimation, constitutes the chief mark by which evangelicals are distinguished from non-evangelicals.

That there is a Christian sense, so to speak,—internal tradition, as it is sometimes called, to distinguish it from the external,—which belongs to Christians, and which makes them altogether better judges of what is Christian truth

than are those who are not Christians, and that the just, those who belong to the soul of the church, have a clearer perception, a more vivid appreciation, of the truth, beauty, grandeur, and work of Christian faith than have the unregenerate or the unjust, we of course very distinctly and cheerfully admit. We also admit, and contend, that "faith is the gift of God," not merely because it is belief in truth which God has graciously revealed, as our Unitarian friends apparently maintain, but because no man can believe, even now that the truth is revealed, without the aid of divine grace, that is to say, without grace supernaturally bestowed. Faith is a virtue which has merit; but no virtue possible without the aid of divine grace has merit,—that is, merit in relation to eternal life. The grace of faith is absolutely essential to the eliciting of the act of faith.

But this considers faith in as much as it is divine faith, a gift of God, and lying wholly in the supernatural order, not as simply human faith, in which it depends on extrinsic evidence or testimony, and the obligation of a man under the simple law of nature to believe,—the only sense in which, in this discussion, we consider it. Unbelief, in those to whom the Gospel has been preached is a sin not merely against the revealed law, but also against the natural law, which it could not be, if the Gospel did not come accompanied with sufficient evidence to warrant belief in every reasonable man. No man is to blame for not believing what is not sufficiently evidenced to his understanding, or for not taking, prior to his knowledge of his obligation to do so, the necessary steps to obtain through grace the faith that translates him from the natural order into the supernatural kingdom of God. Sin is predicable of the will, not of the intellect, and if the evidence were not all that can be justly required to convince the intellect, there could be no sin in simple refusal of the will to believe. The sin lies in the refusal to believe what is sufficiently evidenced; for the refusal can then proceed only from some moral repugnance to the truth, or some propensity of the will, which restrains the man from duly considering the truth and weighing its evidence. Undoubtedly, grace, to illustrate the understanding and to incline the will, is necessary to enable a man to elicit the supernatural act of faith, or to be a true Christian believer; but it is not needed to supply the defect of the evidences objectively considered, because simple natural reason itself is bound to assent to the truth of the Gospel. The

Gospel is addressed to man as a reasonable being, and therefore must satisfy the reasonable demands of reason, and it is because it does so satisfy them, that not to believe it is a sin under the natural law. Reason itself commands us to believe it. Hence grace cannot be necessary, simply for the purpose of supplying the defect of evidence, considered as all evidence must be, as addressed to natural reason.

But the Calvinistic view is not that the private illumination, or the grace of faith is simply necessary to translate one into the kingdom of grace, and enable him to elicit an act of divine or supernatural faith, but to supply the defect of logical evidence, for it is asserted as the witness to the fact of revelation. The grace is bestowed in the fact of regeneration, and therefore implies that prior to regeneration there is no sufficient evidence for believing revelation. The moral obligation to believe cannot begin till the evidence is complete, so the unregenerate are under no obligation to believe, and in them unbelief is, and can be, no sin! This is not the Christian doctrine, for God commands all men to repent and believe in his Son, under pain of present wrath and eternal condemnation.

But according to the Evangelical doctrine regeneration consists precisely in the gift of faith. There is, according to the same doctrine, no amissibility of grace; once in grace, always in grace; consequently, after regeneration unbelief is impossible, and the regenerate can never contract the sin of unbelief. Before regeneration unbelief is not a sin, consequently, there can never be any sin of unbelief—a most convenient doctrine to all misbelievers and infidels. Yet the New Testament clearly teaches, if it clearly teaches any thing, that infidelity is a most grievous sin. This Calvinistic view is therefore clearly inadmissible.

In another form, the doctrine of private illumination is made to mean not merely the confirmation of the believer's faith in a revelation previously made and propounded for his belief, but the medium of the revelation itself. It regards all external revelation, all that may be called historical Christianity, as unnecessary, and teaches that each man has, by grace, the infallible witness in himself, that the Spirit of Truth, promised by Christ to his apostles to lead them into all truth is, and has been, in every man born into the world, from Adam to the present moment, and is in every man an infallible teacher, revealing and confirming to him all the truth which concerns his spiritual state, relations,

and destiny. We say, *by grace;* for we do not here speak of the doctrine of our modern transcendentalists, which, though often confounded with the view we have given, which is the Quaker view, is yet quite distinguishable from it. The transcendentalist doctrine excludes all grace, all that is supernatural, and assumes, that man, by virtue of his natural union with the Divinity, is able to apprehend intuitively all spiritual truth. This, with a transcendental felicity of expression, has been denominated "natural-supernaturalism." But this is only another way of stating the doctrine refuted under the head of the sufficiency of reason as the principle of intuition. "Natural-supernatural" is a barbarism, and involves a direct contradiction. Either the truths attained lie within the range of our natural powers, or they do not. If not, the transcendental doctrine is false, for then the knowledge of them would be supernatural. If they do, then they are not supernatural at all. Transcendentalism, in point of fact, admits no supernatural order. Its adherents, following the sublimated nonsense of that profound opium-eater and literary plagiarist, Coleridge, define supernatural to be *supersensuous;* and because by science we evidently can attain to what is not sensuous, they sagely infer that we are able to know naturally the supernatural! Just as if what is naturally attained could be supernatural, either as the object known, or as the medium by which it is known! Just as if nature could not include the supersensible as well as the sensible, as if the soul were not as natural as the body, an angel as a man! But this "natural-supernaturalism" which makes the fortune of Carlyle, Emerson, Parker, and we know not how many German dreamers, is nothing but a transcendental way of denying all supernatural revelation, and its refutation does not belong to the present discussion. It is intended to account for the phenomena presented by the religious history of mankind, without the admission of the supernatural or gracious intervention of Almighty God, and would deserve attention if we were defending Christianity against unbelievers. We have no concern with it now, for at present we are defending the church against heretics, not against infidels.

The Quaker view is theoretically, though perhaps not practically, distinct from this transcendental natural-supernaturalism. It does not assume that the supernatural is naturally intelligible, nor that the supernatural is merely the supersensible. It admits the supernatural order, and con-

tends that the witness in every man is distinct from human reason, and is in the proper sense of the term supernatural. Now this witness, called "the light within," either enables us to see intuitively the truth, or it merely witnesses to the fact of revelation. If the first, it is too much; for it would imply that the truth is matter of knowledge and not of faith, contrary to what we have proved. Moreover, it would imply that man is blest with the beatific vision in this life, and sees and knows God intuitively, as he is in himself, which is not true. If the second, then, to the fact of *what* revelation does it witness? To the revelation which God has made us through his Son Jesus Christ? Does it witness to this by an inward perception of the truth of the matter revealed? or by simply deposing to the fact that God revealed it? Not the first, because that would make the truth revealed a matter of science. Then the second. But of this we demand proof. Do you say, that the spirit beareth witness to the fact? How will you prove to us, or even to yourself, that it does so witness, and that the spirit witnessing in you is veritably and infallibly the spirit of God? Do you allege, the spirit is in every man testifying to the same fact, and proving itself to each man to be really and truly the infallible spirit of God? We deny it, and millions deny it with us. What have you to oppose to our denial? Do you admit our denial? Then you abandon your doctrine? Do you say our denial is false? Then, also, you abandon your doctrine; for you admit that we err, and therefore cannot have in us an infallible teacher. If we deny, we deny by as high authority as you affirm; and what reason, then can you give why your affirmation must be received rather than our denial?

Again: How do you prove that every man has this infallible witness? From the external revelation, by passages from the Holy Scriptures? Then you reason in a vicious circle; for you take the inward witness to prove the Scriptures and then the Scriptures to prove the witness. From immediate revelation to yourself? Then you must prove that you are the recipient of such revelation, which you can do only by a miracle, for a miracle is the only proper proof of such a fact.

But do you abandon the ground that it is the external revelation to which the witness deposes, and contend that it is rather the medium of a revelation made solely to the individual, than the witness to a revelation made and pro-

pounded for the belief of all men in common? Then it is nothing to the purpose. Granting its reality, it can avail only each man separately; nothing to a *common* belief, and be no ground for crediting a common revelation, or for making a public or external profession of faith. But the revelation to which we are seeking a witness is not a new revelation, not a private revelation which Almighty God may see proper to make to individuals, but a revelation already made, and propounded for the belief of all men. This is the revelation to be established; and since your private revelation does not establish this, or, if so, only by superseding it and rendering it of no value (for it can prove it even to the individual only by its being seen to be identical with what the individual receives without it), it evidently cannot be the witness we are in pursuit of. And this is the common answer to the alleged private illumination, whatever its form. It is valid, if valid at all, only within the bosom of the individual, and can be alleged in support of no common or public faith; therefore can be no witness in any disputed case. It may be a private benefit, or may not be. It is a matter not to be spoken of, and a fact never to be used, when the question relates to any thing but the individual himself. The faith we are required to have is a faith propounded to all men, a public faith, and must be sustained by public evidence, by arguments which are open to all and common to all. We must, therefore, reject this *third* answer, as inappropriate and insufficient.*

4. From what we have established it follows that the witness to the fact of revelation is not reason, the Bible interpreted by private reason, nor private illumination. No witness, then, remains to be introduced but the apostolic ministry, or *Ecclesia docens*. We do not deny the possibility on the part of God of adopting some other method; but he manifestly has not adopted any other than one of the four methods we have enumerated. The first three of these four we have proved he cannot have adopted, because they are inadequate. Then, either the last method is adopted, and the apostolic ministry is the witness, or we have no witness. But we have a witness, as before proved. Therefore, the apostolic ministry, or *Ecclesia docens*, is the witness.

*This subject the reader will find still further discussed in the articles which follow in reply to the *Episcopal Observer*, and Professor Thornwell.

This conclusion stands firm without any further proof, but we do not intend to leave it without proving it by plain, positive, and direct evidence. But before proceeding to do this, we must dispose of one or two preliminary difficulties. According to the principles we have laid down, the witness to the supernatural is incompetent unless it be itself supernatual, or, what is the same thing, supernaturally aided. But the apostolic ministry is composed of men, each of whom, taken singly, is confessedly only human. The whole is only the sum of the parts. Therefore the ministry itself is only human. If human, natural. If natural, incompetent. Therefore the apostolic ministry cannot be such a witness as is demanded.

This objection is founded on the supposition that the collective body of teachers are assumed to be the witness by virtue of their natural powers or endowments, which is not the fact. Left to their natural powers, the body of teachers, taken either singly or corporately, would be altogether incompetent, however learned, wise, or saintly. The competency of the body of teachers is asserted solely on the ground that Jesus Christ is with it, and supernaturally speaks in and through it; and in and through the body rather than the teachers taken singly, because his promise, on which we rely, is made to the body, and not to the individuals taken singly. The ministry is the organ through which our Lord *supernaturally* bears witness to his own revelation. If this be a fact, if our Lord really, by his supernatural presence, be with the ministry, if in its authoritative teachings he makes it his organ and speaks in and through it, its competency cannot be questioned; for we then have in it the supernatural witness to the supernatural. Whether this be a fact or not will soon be considered.

But it is still further objected, that, if the witness to the supernatural must be itself supernatural, the supernatural can never be witnessed to natural reason, and therefore man can never have any good grounds for believing the supernatural, unless he be himself supernaturally elevated above his nature. For the competency of the supernatural witness is a supernatural fact which can be proved only by another supernatural witness, which in turn will require still another, and thus on, *in infinitum*, which is impossible. But we must distinguish between the competency of the witness to testify to the fact of revelation and the

motives of the credibility of the witness. The competency of the witness depends on its supernatural character; the motives of credibility being needed only by natural reason, are such as natural reason may appreciate. The credibility of the witness is supernaturally established to natural reason by means of miracles. A miracle is a supernatural effect produced in or on natural objects, and therefore connects the natural and supernatural, so that natural reason can, in some sense, pass from the one to the other. Since the miracle is wrought on natural objects, it is cognizable by natural reason, and natural reason is able to determine whether a given fact be or be not a miracle. From the miracle reason concludes legitimately the supernatural cause, and the divine commission or authority of him by whom it is wrought. Having established the divine commission or authority of the miracle-worker, we have established his credibility, by having established the fact that God himself vouches for the truth of his testimony. The miracle, therefore, supersedes the necessity of the supposed infinite series of supernatural witnesses, by supernaturally connecting the natural with the supernatural. It is God's own assurance to natural reason, that he speaks in and by or through the person by whom it is performed. Then we have the veracity of God for the truth of what the miracle worker declares, and therefore infallible certainty; for natural reason knows that God can neither deceive nor be deceived.

The supernatural, it follows, is provable. Consequently the character of the apostolic ministry, as the supernatural witness to the fact of revelation, is provable, that is, is not intrinsically unprovable. It becomes a simple question of fact, and is to be proved or disproved in like manner as any other question of fact falling under the cognizance of natural reason. The process of proof is simple and easy. The miracles of our blessed Lord were all that was necessary to establish his divine authority to those who saw them; for it was evident, as Nicodemus said to him, "No man can do these miracles which thou doest, unless God be with him." St. John iii. 2. These accredited him as a teacher from God. Then he was necessarily what he professed to be, and what he declared to be God's word was God's word. This was sufficient for the eye-witness of the miracles.

But we are not eye-witnesses. True; but the fact, whether the miracles were performed or not, is a simple

historical question, to which reason is as competent as to any other historical question. If it can be established infallibly to us that the miracles were actually performed, we are virtually and to all intents and purposes in the condition of the eye-witnesses themselves, and they are to us all they were to them. Then they accredit to us, as to them, the divine commission of Jesus, and authorize the conclusion that whatever he said or promised was infallible truth; for whether you say Jesus was himself truly God as well as truly man, or that he was only divinely commissioned, you have in either case the veracity of God as the ground of faith in what he has said or promised.

Now, suppose it to be a fact that Jesus appointed a body of teachers, and promised to be always with them, protecting them from error and teaching them all truth; and suppose, further, that the appointment and promise are ascertainable by natural reason, infallibly ascertainable, we should then have infallible certainty that Jesus Christ does speak in and through this body, that it is infallible in what it teaches, and therefore that what it declares to be the word of God is the word of God; for it is infallibly certain that Jesus Christ will keep his promise, since the promise is made by God himself, either directly, as we hold, or through his accredited agent, as the *Christian Examiner* holds, and it is impossible for God to lie, or to promise and not fulfil. In this case, calling this body of teachers the Catholic Church, we could make our act of faith without the least room for doubt or hesitation. "O my God! I firmly believe all the sacred truths the Catholic Church believes and teaches, because *thou* hast revealed them, who canst neither deceive nor be deceived."

Taking the facts in the case to be as here supposed, the only points in the process to which exceptions can possibly be taken, or which can by any one be alleged to be not infallibly certain, are, 1. The competency of natural reason from historical testimony to establish the fact that the miracles were actually performed; 2. Admitting the facts to be infallibly ascertainable, the competency of reason to determine infallibly whether they are miracles or not; 3. The competency of reason to conclude from the miracle the divine authority of the miracle-worker; 4. Its competency from historical documents to ascertain infallibly the fact of the appointment of the body of teachers, and the promise made them. These four points, unquestionably essential to

the validity of the argument, are to be taken, we admit, on the authority of reason. Can reason determine these with infallible certainty? But, if you say it can, you affirm the infallibility of reason, and then it of itself suffices, without other infallible teacher; if you say it cannot, you deny the possibility of establishing infallibly the infallibility of your body of teachers.

Reason is infallible within its own province, but not in regard to what transcends its reach. To deny the infallibility of reason within its province would be to deny the possibility not only of faith, but of both science and knowledge, and to sink into absolute scepticism,—even to "doubt that doubt itself be doubting,"—which is impossible; for no man doubts that he doubts. Revelation does not deny reason, but presuppose it. The objection to reason is not that it cannot judge infallibly of *some* matters, but that it cannot judge infallibly of *all* matters. But, because it cannot judge infallibly of all matters, to say it can judge infallibly of none is not to reason justly. As well say, we are not infallibly certain that we see the tree before our window, because we cannot see all that may be going on in the moon. It is infallibly certain that the same thing cannot both be and not be at the same time; that two things respectively equal to a third are equal to one another; that the three angles of a triangle are equal to two right angles; that what begins to exist must have a creator; that every effect must have a cause, and that every supernatural effect must have a supernatural cause, and that the change of one natural substance into another natural substance is a supernatural effect; that every voluntary agent acts to some end, and every wise and good agent to a wise and good end. These and the like propositions are all infallibly certain. Reason, within its sphere, is therefore infallible; but out of its sphere it is null.

Human testimony, within its proper limits, backed by circumstances, monuments, institutions which presuppose its truth and are incompatible with its falsehood, is itself infallible. We have never seen London, but we have no occasion to see it in order to be as certain of its existence as we are of our own. History, too, is a science; and although every thing narrated in it may not be true or even probable, yet there are historical facts as certain as mathematical certainty itself. It is infallibly certain that there were in the ancient world the republics of Athens, Sparta, and Rome; that there was a peculiar people called the Jews, that this people dwelt in Pal-

estine, that they had a chief city named Jerusalem, in this chief city a superb temple dedicated to the worship of the one God, and that this chief city was taken by the Romans, this temple burnt, and this people, after an immense slaughter, were subdued, and dispersed among the nations, where they remain to this day. Here are historical facts, which can be infallibly proved to be facts.

Now, the miracles, regarded as facts, are simple historical facts, said to have occurred at a particular time and place, and are in their nature as susceptible of historical proof as any other facts whatever. Ordinary historical testimony is as valid in their case as in the case of Cæsar's or Napoleon's battles. Reason, observing the ordinary laws of historical criticism, is competent to decide infallibly on the fact whether they are proved to have actually occurred or not. Reason, then, is competent to the *first* point in the process of proof, namely, the fact of the miracles.

It is equally competent to the *second* point, namely, whether the fact alleged to be a miracle really be a miracle. A miracle is a supernatural effect produced in or on natural objects. The point for reason to make out, after the fact is proved, is whether the effect actually witnessed be a *supernatural* effect. That it can do this in every case, even when the effect is truly miraculous, we do not pretend ; but that it can do it in some cases, we affirm, and to be able to do it in one suffices. When we see one natural substance changed into another natural substance, as in the case of converting water into wine, we know the change is a miracle ; for nature can no more change herself than she could create herself. So, when we see a man who has been four days dead, and in whose body the process of decomposition has commenced and made considerable progress, restored to life and health, sitting with his friends at table and eating, we know it is a miracle ; for to restore life when extinct is no less an act of creative power than to give life. It is giving life to that which before had it not, and is therefore an act which can be performed by no being but God alone. Reason, then, is competent to determine the fact whether the alleged miracle really be a miracle. It is competent, then, to the second point in the process of proof.

No less competent is it to the *third*, namely, the divine commission of the miracle-worker. In proving the event to be a miracle, we prove it to be wrought by the power of God. Now, we know enough of God, by the natural light of rea-

son, to know that he cannot be the accomplice of an impostor, that he cannot work a miracle by one whose word may not be taken. The miracle, then, establishes the credibility of the miracle-worker. Then, the miracle-worker is what he says he is. If he says he is God, he is God; if he says he speaks by divine authority, he speaks by divine authority, and we have God's authority for what he says. The third point, then, comes within the province of natural reason, and may be infallibly settled.

The *fourth* point is a simple historical question; for it concerns what was done and said by our blessed Lord in regard to the appointment of a body of teachers. It is to be settled historically, by consulting the proper documents and monuments in the case. It is not a question of speculation, of interpretation even, but simply a question of fact, to which reason is fully competent, and which it can, with proper prudence and documents, settle infallibly.

These remarks accepted, it follows that the infallible certainty we demand is possible, that is, is not *a priori* impossible. In passing from the possible to the actual, it is necessary to establish, by historical testimony, the miracles of our blessed Lord, from which we conclude his divinity or divine commission, and that he did appoint a body of teachers, commission the church teaching, with the promise of infallibility and indefectibility. The first, the *Christian Examiner* concedes; we proceed, therefore, to the proof of the second.

The question before us, distinctly stated, is, Has Jesus Christ commissioned a body of pastors and teachers, and given this body the promise of infallibility and indefectibility? If not, faith, as we have seen, is impossible, and no man can have a solid reason for the Christian hope he professes to entertain. It is, then, worth inquiring, whether we have not sufficient proof of the fact that he has commissioned such a body.

In settling this question, we shall use the New Testament, but simply as an historical document. We do this because it abridges our labor, and because the New Testament, so far as we shall have occasion to adduce it, is admitted as good authority by those against whom we are reasoning. It is their own witness, and its testimony must be conclusive against them. Moreover, its general authenticity, as a contemporary historical document, would fully warrant its use, even if not adduced by our adversaries.

It must not be objected to us, that, after what we have said of the necessity of an infallible authority to authenticate the canon, to quote the Bible to establish the commission in question is to reason in a vicious circle. This is the standing Protestant objection. We do not admit it. For, 1. We do not depend on the Bible for the historical facts from which we conclude the commission of the *Ecclesia docens*, or body of pastors and teachers; for these facts we can collect from other sources equally reliable, and do so collect them when we reason with unbelievers; and 2. We do not, in this controversy, quote the Bible as an *inspired* volume, but simply as an *historical* document, and therefore not in that character in which the authority of the church is necessary to authenticate it.

Nor, again, let it be said, that, since, in quoting the Bible to establish the point before us, we have only our private reason for interpreter, we are precluded by our own principles from quoting it at all; for to be able from the Bible and private reason alone to deduce the faith which is the condition *sine qua non* of salvation is one thing; to be able from the New Testament as an historical document to ascertain a simple matter of fact which it records is another and quite a different thing. Some things are clearly and expressly recorded in the Bible, and some are not. Those which are not clearly and expressly stated are not to be infallibly ascertained without an infallible interpreter. But if we are to deduce our faith from the Bible alone, we must be able by private reason alone to ascertain these as well as the others; for we are not to presume that Almighty God has revealed any thing superfluous, or not essential to the faith. That we can so ascertain all that is contained in the Bible we have denied, and still deny; and so must every honest man who has ever seriously attempted the work of interpreting the Sacred Scriptures. But that there are some things in the Bible which may be infallibly ascertained, we have not denied, nor dreamed of denying. What is clearly and expressly taught in the Bible can be as easily and as infallibly ascertained as what is clearly and expressly taught in any other book; and if all in the book, were clear and express, we should no more need any interpreter, but our own reason prudently exercised, than we should for a decree of a council or a brief of the pope. It is the character of the book itself that renders the interpreter necessary; and the fact, that its character is such as demands an interpreter to make ob-

vious its contents, is, to say the least, a strong presumption that Almighty God never intended it as the fountain from which we are to draw our faith by private reason alone. If he had so intended it, he would have made it so plain, so express, so definite, that no one, with ordinary prudence, could fail to catch its precise meaning. But admitting the obvious insufficiency of private reason to interpret the whole Bible and deduce from it the faith we are required to have, we may still contend that by the reason common to all men we are able to determine even infallibly some of its contents. No objection can, then, be urged against our quoting it in the present controversy, especially since we shall quote only what is clear, distinct, and express, and what all must admit to be so.

In proof of our position, that Jesus Christ has appointed, commissioned, a body of teachers with authority to teach, we quote the well-known passage in St. Matthew's Gospel, xxviii. 18, 19, 20, "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, ... teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you; and behold, I am with you all days unto the consummation of the world;" also, St. Mark, xvi. 15, "Go ye into all the earth, and preach the Gospel unto every creature;" and, Eph. iv. 11, "And some indeed he gave to be apostles, and some prophets, and some evangelists, and others pastors and teachers."

These are conclusive as to the fact that Jesus Christ did commission a body of teachers, or institute the *Ecclesia docens*. The commission is from one who had authority to give it, because from one unto whom was given all power in heaven and in earth; it was a commission to *teach*, to teach all nations, to preach the Gospel to "every creature,"—equivalent, to say the least, to all nations and individuals,—and to teach *all things whatsoever* Jesus Christ himself commanded. The commission is obviously as full, as express, as unequivocal, as language can make it, and was given by our blessed Lord after his resurrection, immediately before his ascension.

That this was not merely a commission to the apostles personally is evident from the terms of the commission itself, and the promise with which it closes. It was the institution and commission of a body or corporation of teachers, which beginning with the apostles and continuing the identical body they were, must subsist unto the con-

summation of the world. For they who were commissioned were commanded to teach all nations and individuals, and in the order of succession as well as in the order of co-existence; for such is the literal import of the terms. But this command the apostles personally *did* not fulfil, for all nations and individuals, even using the term *all* to imply a moral and not a metaphysical universality, have not yet been taught; they *could* not fulfil it, for during their personal lifetime all nations and individuals were not even in existence. Then one of three things;—1. The apostles failed to fulfil the command of their Master; 2. Our blessed Lord gave an impracticable command; or, 3. The commission was not to the apostles in their personal character. We can say neither of the first two; therefore we must say the last.

But the commission was to the apostles, and therefore the body of teachers must, in some way, be identical with them, as is evident from the command, "Go *ye*," indisputably addressed to the apostles themselves. But they can be identical with the apostles in but two ways:—1. Personally; 2. Corporately. They are not personally identical, for that would make them the apostles themselves, as numerical individuals, which we have just seen they are not. Then they must be corporately identical. Then the commission was to a corporation of teachers. The commission gave ample authority to teach. Therefore Jesus Christ did commission a body of teachers with ample authority to teach,—and, since commissioned to teach all nations and individuals in the order of succession as well as of co-existence, a perpetual or always subsisting corporation. Thus the very letter of the commission sustains our position.

The *promise* with which the commission closes does the same. "Behold I am with you all days unto the consummation of the world." They to whom this promise was made, and with whom the Saviour was to be present were identical with the apostles, for he says to the apostles, "I am with *you*." They were to be in time, that is, in this life; for he says, I am with you all *days*,—πάσας τὰς ἡμέρας—which cannot apply to eternity, in which the divisions of time do not obtain. They were not the apostles personally, because our blessed Saviour says again, "I am with you all days unto the *consummation of the world*," which is an event still future, and the apostles personally have long since ceased to exist as inhabitants of

time. But they were identical with the apostles, and, since not personally, they must be corporately identical. Therefore the promise was to be with the apostles, as a body or corporation of teachers, all days even unto the consummation of the world. But Jesus Christ cannot be with a body that is not. Therefore the body must remain unto the consummation of the world. Therefore our blessed Lord has instituted, appointed, commissioned a body or corporation of teachers, identical with the apostles, continuing their authority, and which must remain unto the consummation of the world.

The same is also established by the blessed Apostle Paul in the passage quoted from Ephesians, iv. 11, "And he indeed gave some to be apostles, and some prophets, and some evangelists, and others to be pastors and teachers," taken in connection with 1 Cor. xii. 28, "And God indeed hath set some in the church, first, apostles, secondly, prophets, thirdly, teachers; after that miracles, then the graces of healings, helps, governments, kinds of tongues, interpretations of speeches." These texts, so far as we adduce them, clearly and distinctly assert that God has set in the church, or congregation of believers, pastors and teachers as a perpetual ordinance. They prove more than this, for which at another time we may contend; but they prove at least this, which is all we are contending for now. "God hath set," "God gave to be." These expressions prove the pastors and teachers to be of divine appointment, and therefore that they are not created or commissioned by the congregation itself. They are set in the church, given to be, as a perpetual ordinance; for the rule for understanding any passage of scripture, sacred or profane, is to take it always in a universal sense, unless the assertion of the passage be necessarily restricted in its application by something in the nature of the subject, or in the context, some known fact, or some principle of reason or of faith. But obviously nothing of the kind can be adduced, to restrict the sense of these passages either in regard to time or space. They are, therefore, to be taken in their plain, obvious, unlimited sense. Therefore the institution of pastors and teachers is not only divine, but universal and perpetual in the church.

We may obtain the same result from the end for which the pastors and teachers are appointed; for the *argumentum ad quem* is not less conclusive than the *argumentum a quo.* If the end to be attained cannot be attained without assum-

ing the authority and perpetuity of the body of pastors and teachers, we have a right to conclude their authority and perpetuity; since they are appointed by God himself, who cannot fail to adapt his means to his ends. For what end, then, has God instituted this body of pastors and teachers? The apostle answers, "For the perfection of the saints, for the work of the ministry, unto the edification of the body of Christ, till we all meet in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the age of the fulness of Christ; that *we may not now be children tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, in the wickedness of men, in craftiness by which they lie in wait to deceive;* but, performing the truth in charity, we may in all things grow up in him who is the head, Christ." Eph. iv. 12–15. This needs no comment. The end here proposed, for which the Christian ministry is instituted, is one which always and everywhere subsists, and must so long as the world remains. But this is an end which obviously cannot be secured but by an authoritative and perpetual body of teachers. Therefore, the body of teachers is authoritative and perpetual. Therefore, God, or God in Jesus Christ, has appointed, commissioned, a body of teachers, the *Ecclesia docens*, as an authoritative and perpetual corporation, to subsist unto the consummation of the world.

We have now proved the first part of our proposition, namely, the fact of the institution and commission of the *Ecclesia docens* as an authoritative and perpetual corporation of teachers. Its authority is in the commission to teach; its perpetuity, in the fact that it cannot discharge its commission without remaining to the consummation of the world, in the promise of Christ to be with it till then, which necessarily implies its existence unto the consummation of the world, and in the fact that the promise is to it as a corporation identical with the apostles. The proof of this first part of our proposition necessarily proves the second, namely, the *infallibility* of the corporation. The divine commission necessarily carries with it the infallibility of the commissioned to the full extent of the commission. It is on this fact that is grounded the evidence of miracles. Miracles do not prove the truth of the doctrine taught; they merely accredit the teacher, and this they do simply by proving that the teacher is divinely commissioned. The fact to be established is the divine commission. This

once established, it makes no difference whether established immediately, by a miracle, or mediately, by the declaration of one already proved by miracles, as was our blessed Lord, to speak by divine authority. Jesus, it is conceded, spoke by divine authority, even by those who, with the *Christian Examiner*, deny his proper divinity. Then a commission given by him was a divine commission, and pledged Almighty God in like manner as if given by Almighty God himself directly. The teachers were, then, divinely commissioned. Then in all matters covered by the commission they are infallible; for God himself vouches for the truth of their testimony, and must take care that they testify the truth and nothing but the truth.

Moreover, the command to teach implies the obligation of obedience. The commission is a command to teach, and to teach all nations and individuals. Then all nations and individuals are bound to believe and obey these teachers; for authority and obedience are correlatives, and where there is no duty to believe and obey, there is no authority to teach. But it is repugnant to reason and the known character of God to say that he makes it the duty of any one to believe and obey a fallible teacher, one who may both deceive and be deceived. Were he to do so, he would participate in the same fallibility, and be the false teacher's accomplice, which is impossible; for he is, as we have said, *prima veritas in essendo, in cognoscendo, et in dicendo*, and therefore can neither deceive nor be deceived. Therefore they whom he has commissioned, must be infallible.

We prove the promise of infallibility also from the express testimony of the New Testament. "I will ask the Father," says the Saviour, addressing the disciples, "and he shall give you another Paraclete, that he may abide with you for ever, the Spirit of Truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, nor knoweth him; but ye shall know him, because he shall abide with you, and be in you. . . . . He shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your mind whatsoever I shall have said to you. . . . When he, the Spirit of Truth, shall come, he shall teach you all truth; for he shall not speak of himself, but whatsoever things he shall hear he shall speak. He shall glorify me, for he shall receive of mine and declare it unto you." St. John, xiv. 16, 17, 26; xvi. 13, 14.

They to whom is here promised the Spirit of Truth are unquestionably the apostles, who, we have seen, were commis-

sioned as teachers; but to them necessarily in their corporate capacity, as the *Ecclesia docens*, not personally, because it is said, the Paraclete shall "abide with you *for ever*." It is not to a body of teachers in general, that is, to any body of teachers which may claim to be apostolic, that the promise is made, but to that body which is identical with the apostles, because it is said, "he shall abide with *you*," that is, the apostles. This identifies the subjects of this promise with the subjects of the commission before ascertained. The promise is express, and unmistakable. The Spirit of Truth was not only to abide with the teachers for ever, but was to teach them all things, and bring to their minds whatever Jesus may have said to them; in a word, to teach them "*all truth*," that is, all truth included in the terms of the commission. If this be not a promise of infallibility, we confess we know not what would be.

The infallibility of the teachers is, then, established. But, for the special benefit of our Protestant readers, who are a little dull of apprehension on this subject, we repeat, that we do not predicate this infallibility of the body of teachers in their natural capacity, nor of their personal endowments. It in no way, manner, or shape depends on their personal qualities or personal characters, however exalted, whether for intelligence, learning, sagacity, or sanctity. It is God speaking in and through them; God, who can choose the foolish things of this world to confound the wise, weak things to bring to naught the mighty, nay, base things, and things that are not, and out of the mouth of babes and sucklings show forth his truth and perfect his praise; who can make the wrath of men praise him, and even the wicked the instruments of his will and the organs of his word; and who does do so at times, that it may be seen that his truth does not stand in human wisdom, nor his church depend on human virtue.

For the special benefit of the same class of readers, we remark, also, that the infallibility claimed extends only to those matters included in the terms of the commission. These are to "teach all the things whatsoever" Jesus commands. In relation to those matters Jesus did not command, or concerning which he gave no commandment, infallibility is not claimed, and could not be established if it were. Nevertheless, from the nature of the case, the church teaching must be the judge of what things Jesus has commanded her to teach, and therefore unquestionably the interpreter

of her own powers. To assume to the contrary would be to deny her authority while seeming to admit it. If she alone has received authority to teach, she alone can say what she has authority to teach.

The *indefectibility* of the *Ecclesia docens* follows as a necessary consequence from what has been already established. The commission is the pledge of its own fulfilment. Whatever commission God gives must be fulfilled. This must be admitted, because the commission pledges God himself. The commission was not of a body of teachers, that is, of some body of teachers who should always be found, but it was solely, exclusively, and expressly to the apostolic ministry. It was to the identical body to whom Jesus himself spoke. He spoke to the apostles. It was to them, and to them only, the commission was given. But it was a commission the terms of which imply that the commissioned must remain even unto the consummation of the world. But the apostles none of them personally did so remain. Therefore, though given to them exclusively, it was not given to them in their personal character, but was given, as we have proved, to them as a corporation or body of teachers, in which sense they may continue unto the consummation of the world; for one of the attributes of a corporation is immortality, and, so long as the terms of its charter are observed, it is perpetuated as the same identical corporation. Now, as the commission was given to the apostles as a corporation, it was given only to that identical corporation, continued or perpetuated in space and time, which they were. But this commission is a commission to this corporation to teach, and to teach even to the consummation of the world. Then it must exist as the identical corporation to the consummation of the world. Then it can never fail to exist, or lose its identity. The commission is a pledge of infallibility. Then it can never fail, or lose its identity as an infallible body. If it fail in neither of these respects, it is indefectible, so far as we have affirmed its indefectibility; for we have affirmed its indefectibility only as a body of infallible teachers.

If there be any truth in the principles laid down, any reliance to be placed on the promises of Almighty God made through his Son Jesus Christ, it is infallibly certain that God has, through his Son, established an infallible and indefectible ministry, or *Ecclesia docens*, commanded it to teach all nations and individuals "all things whatsoever" he has re-

vealed, and therefore commanded all nations and individuals to submit to it, to believe, observe, obey whatsoever it teaches as the revelation of God. The only remaining question for us is, Which of the pretended Christian ministries now extant is the true apostolic ministry; that is to say, which is the body of teachers that inherits the promises? For if we find this one, we know then that it has the promise of infallibility, and that whatever it declares to be the word of God is the word of God. We can know then in whom we believe, and be certain. We need spend but a moment in answering this question. The ministry must be the identical apostolic ministry, the identical corporation to which the promises were made. It is the corporate identity that is to be established. It is known already, that it, at any period we may assume, is in existence; for it is indefectible, and cannot fail. We say, then,

It is the Roman Catholic ministry. It can be no other. It cannot be the Greek Church. The Greek Church was formerly in communion with the church of Rome, and made one corporation with it. The church of Rome was then the true church, *Ecclesia docens*, or it was not. If not, the Greek Church is false, in consequence of having communed with a false church. If it was, the Greek Church is false, because it separated from it. So, take either horn of the dilemma, the Greek Church is false, and its ministry not the apostolic ministry which inherits the promises. The same reasoning will apply with equal force to any one of the Oriental sects not in communion with the See of Rome, and *a fortiori* to all the modern Protestant sects. Therefore the Roman Catholic ministry is the apostolic corporation, because this corporation can be no other.

You object, in behalf of the Greek Church, that Rome separated from her, not she from Rome. This we deny. It is historically certain that the Greek Church, prior to the final separation, agreed with the church of Rome on the matters (the Supremacy of the Pope and the Procession of the Holy Ghost) which were made the pretexts for separation. In the separation, the Greek Church denied what she had before asserted, while Rome continued to assert the same doctrine after as before. Therefore the Greek Church was the dissentient party. Prior to the separation, the Greek Church agreed with the Roman in submitting to the papal authority. In the separation, the Greek Church threw off this authority, while the Roman continued to submit to it. Therefore the Greek Church was the separatist.

You insist, that, though the act of separation may, indeed, have been formally the act of the Greek Church, yet the separation was really on the part of Rome, who had corrupted the faith, and rendered separation from her necessary to the purity of the Christian Church. But, if this be so, whatever the corruptions of the faith Rome had been guilty of, the Greek Church participated in them during her communion with Rome. If they vitiated the Latin Church, they equally vitiated the Greek. Then both had failed, and the true church, which we have seen is indefectible, must have been somewhere else. Then the Greek Church could become a true church by separating from the communion of the Latin Church only on condition of coming into communion with the true church. But it came into communion with no church. Therefore the Greek Church, at any rate, is false.

The same reasoning applies to the before mentioned Oriental sects, and *a fortiori* to Protestants. Protestants were once in communion with Rome. They either were then in communion with the church of Christ, or they were not. If they were, they are not now, because they have separated from it. If they were not, they could come into communion with the church of Christ only by joining the true church. But they joined none. Therefore they are not in communion with the church of Christ, and their pretended ministries are none of them the apostolic ministry. Therefore, we say again, it is the Roman Catholic ministry, because it can be no other, and must be some one.

You object, that the true church always subsists, indeed, but not always as a visible body, and therefore may be neither one nor another of the special church organizations extant, but in point of fact be dispersed through them all. But this objection is not pertinent; for we are not considering the question of the church in the sense in which it is taken in this objection. The objection takes the word *church* in the sense of the congregation of the just, or persons called and sanctified; we, in the question before us, take it in the sense of the congregation of Christian pastors and teachers, in which sense it can neither be invisible nor dispersed. It is the witness to the fact of revelation, and it is essential that the witness should be visible, that its competency and credibility may be judged of. It is commanded to teach all nations and individuals, and all

nations and individuals are therefore commanded to believe and obey whatever it teaches. But, if invisible, this command is impracticable; for we could never know where, when, or what it teaches, and therefore whether we believed and obeyed its teachings, or not. It cannot be dispersed through various communions, because it is a corporation, and its dispersion would be its dissolution. It is a corporation of *teachers*. No man has a right to teach, unless commissioned by Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ, as we have seen, commissions individuals only in and through the commission of the body. Then one must be united to the body, as the condition of receiving a commission to teach. Therefore the teachers cannot be dispersed though different corporations. The teaching body is infallible, and, if dispersed through all communions, the truth must be infallibly taught in all communions. But it is so taught only in one communion; because all communions differ among themselves, and could not differ had they no error. As no two can be found that agree, only one can have the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. Therefore the ministry in question is only one, and not dispersed. It cannot be dispersed; for, if it were, it could not answer the end of its institution, which is to maintain unity of faith, perfect the saints in the knowledge of the Son of God, and prevent us from being children tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine; for to secure this end it must be public, recognizable, one, uniform, and authoritative. Nor could the individual teacher ever verify his commission, as a teacher sent from God, unless he can point to the visible body of which he is a member, and which was commissioned by Jesus Christ, and from him inherits the promises. Therefore we dismiss this notion of the invisible church, and of an invisible body of true Christian teachers dispersed through various and conflicting communions. Such teachers would be as good as none, for no one could distinguish them from false teachers.

We repeat, then, the Roman Catholic ministry is the apostolic ministry, for this ministry can be no other. This conclusion very few, perhaps none, would deny, if they admitted, what we have proved, that Jesus Christ did institute such a ministry as we contend for. If there be an infallible church, authorized by the Saviour to teach, all must say, it is indisputably the Roman Catholic Church; for all see it can be no other, and, in fact no other even pretends to be it.

But we may prove our proposition not merely by the removal or destruction of the negative, but by plain, positive, affirmative evidence. The first method of proof is conclusive in itself; the second is also conclusive in itself. All that is to be done to prove the proposition affirmatively is, to identify the Roman Catholic ministry, as a corporation, with the corporation Jesus Christ instituted and commissioned in the persons of the apostles. The kind of evidence needed is the same as is requisite in any case of the identification of a corporation. The identity is established by showing that the corporation retains its original name, and has regulary succeeded to the original corporators. The *name* is not conclusive evidence, but is a presumption of identity. In the present case, it is easy to prove that the ministry in question retains the apostolic name. This name is *Catholic*, and the Roman Catholic Church bears it, and always has borne it. It is and always has been known and distinguished by it, and no other corporation is or ever has been known or distinguished by it. The old Donatists claimed it, but could not appropriate it. They are known only as *Donatists*. Some members of the English and American Episcopal Church, now and then, put on airs, and with great emphasis call themselves *Catholics;* but the bystanders only smile, for they see the long ears peering out from under the lion's skin. While, on the other hand, go into any city in the world and ask the first lad you meet to direct you to the *Catholic* Church, and he will direct you without hesitation to the *Roman* Catholic Church. This shows, that, by the common judgment and consent of mankind, the distinctive appellation of the church in communion with the see of Rome is *Catholic*.

The regular succession of the Roman Catholic ministry to the apostolic is easily made out. We can establish the regular succession of pontiffs from St. Peter to Gregory XVI, the present pope; and this establishes the unity of the corporation in time, and therefore its identity. The regular succession and unity of authority of the corporation can also be established in the orders and mission of the pastors; for the Catholic ministry has never been schismatic. This regular succession and unity of authority establishes, of course, the identity of the corporation. Then the Catholic ministry is identical with the apostolic ministry. The two points on which this conclusion depends we leave, of course, without adducing in detail the historical proof of them. Established historically, they warrant the conclusion. They can be

established by conclusive historical proof. Therefore the conclusion stands firm.

We establish our proposition, then, by showing that the apostolic ministry *can* be no other than the Roman Catholic, and by showing that it *is* the Roman Catholic. Nothing more conclusive than this double proof can be desired. Then we sum up by repeating, that Jesus Christ has instituted and commissioned an infallible and indefectible body of teachers, and this body is the congregation of the Roman Catholic pastors in communion with their chief. The Catholic Church, then, is the witness to the fact of revelation. What its pastors declare to be the word of God is the word of God; what they enjoin as the faith is the faith without which it is impossible to please God, and without which we are condemned and the wrath of God abideth on us. What they teach is the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth; for God himself has commissioned them, and will not suffer them to fall into error in what concerns the things they have been commissioned to teach.

The question of the church as the congregation of believers can detain us but a moment. We agree with the *Christian Examiner*, that the church in this sense embraces "the whole company of believers, the uncounted and widespread congregation of all those who receive the Gospel as the law of life; that the church of Christ comprehends and is composed of all his followers." But who are these? "My sheep," says our blessed Lord, "hear my voice and follow me." We must hear his voice, as the condition of following him, or being his followers. But we cannot hear his voice where it is not, where it speaks not. Where, then, speaks his voice? In the Catholic Church, in and through the Catholic pastors, and nowhere else. Then we hear his voice only as we hear the voice of the Catholic Church, and follow him only as we follow what this church in his name commands. Only they, then, who hear and obey the Catholic Church are of the church,—only they who are in the communion of this church are in the communion of Christ. It is time, then, to abandon no-churchism, and to return to the one fold of the one Shepherd, and submit ourselves to the guidance of the pastors he has made rulers and teachers of the flock.

We do not suppose this conclusion will be very pleasing to our Protestant readers, and we do not suppose any thing we could say conscientiously, would please them; for we

do not see any right they have to be pleased, standing where they do. There is the stubborn fact, that no man has God for his father who has not the church for his mother, which cannot be got over; and if we have not the true church for our mother, then "are we bastards and not sons." The presumption, to say the least, is strongly against our Protestant brethren: and they have great reason to fear, that, after all, they are only "children of the bond-woman." They may try to hide this from themselves, and to stifle the voice of conscience by crying out "Popery!" "Papist!" "Romanist!" "Idolatry!" "Superstition!" and the like, but this can avail them little. They may make light of the question, and think themselves excused from considering it. But there comes and must come to the greater part of them an hour when they feel the need of something more substantial than any thing they have. They may use swelling words, and speak in a tone of great confidence; but the best of them have their doubts, nay, long periods when they can keep up their courage, and persuade themselves that they hope, only by shutting their eyes, refusing to think, plunging into religious dissipation, or giving way to the wild and destructive bursts of fanaticism and superstition. The great question of the salvation of the soul must at times press heavily upon them, and create no little anxiety. For it is a terrible thing to be forced into the presence of God uncovered by the robe of the Redeemer's righteousness,—a terrible thing to have all the sins of our past life come thronging back on the memory, and to feel that they are registered against us, unrepented of, unforgiven; a terrible thing to feel that the number of these sins is daily and hourly increasing, that we ourselves are continually exposed to the allurements of the world, the seductions of the flesh, and the temptations of the devil, with no weapon but our own puny arm with which to defend ourselves, and no strength but our own infirmity with which to recover and maintain our integrity. Alas! we know what this is. We know what it is to feel oppressed with the heavy load of guilt, to struggle alone in the world, against all manner of enemies, without faith, without hope, without the help of God's sacraments; we know what it is to feel that we must trust in our own arm and heart, stand on the pride of our own intellect and conviction. We know, too, what it is to feel all these defences fail, all this trust give way; for to us have

come, as well as to others, those trying moments when the loftiest are laid low, and the proudest, prostrate in the dust, cry out from the depths of their spiritual agony, "Is there no help? O God! why standest thou afar off? Help, help, or I perish!" Alas! there are moments when we cannot trifle, when we cannot lean on a broken reed, when we *must* have something really divine, something on which we can lay hold that will not break and leave us to drop into everlasting perdition. It is a terrible question this of the salvation of the soul, and no man can prudently put it off. It must be met and answered, and the sooner the better.

We urge this upon our Protestant brethren. They have no solid ground on which to stand, no sure help on which to rely. Their own restlessness proves it; their perpetual variations and shifting of their creeds prove it; the new and strange sects constantly springing up amongst them prove it; their wordly-mindedness, their universal and perpetual striving after what they have not, and find not, prove it; the wide-spread infidelity which prevails among them, and the still more destructive indifferency prove it. Their spiritual strength is the strength of self-confidence or of desperation. They cannot live so. There is no good for them in their present state. Why will they not ask if there be not a better way? If they will but seek, they shall find,—knock, it shall be opened to them. There is that faith which they deny, and that certainty which they ridicule. But they will find it not in their pride. They will find it not, till they learn to look on him they have despised and to fly for succour to him they have crucified. But we have been betrayed into remarks, which, though true, would come with a better grace from one whose faith is less recent than our own. Yet we have said nothing by way of vain-glory. If we have faith, it is no merit of ours. We have been brought by a way we knew not, and by a Power we dared not resist; and his the praise and the glory, and ours the shame and mortification that for so many years we groped in darkness, boasting that we could see, and holding up our farthing-candle of a misguided reason as a light that was to enlighten the world!

We have been asked, "How in the world have you become a Catholic?" In this essay we have presented an outline, or rather a specimen, of the answer we have to give. It is incomplete; but it will satisfy the attentive reader, that not without some show of reason, at least, have

we left our former friends and the endearing associations of our past life, and joined ourselves to a church which excites only the deadly rage of the great mass of our countrymen. The change with us is a great one, and a greater one than the world dreams of, or will dream of. At any rate, it is a change we would not have made if we could have helped it,—a change against which we struggled long, but for which, though it makes us a pilgrim and a sojourner in life, and permits us no home here below, we can never sufficiently praise and thank our God. It is a great gain to lose even earth for heaven. If, however, we be pressed to give the full reason of our change, we must refer to the grace of God, and the need we felt of saving our own soul.

THE EPISCOPAL OBSERVER VS. THE CHURCH.*

[From Brownson's Quarterly Review for July, 1845.]

This periodical, the recently established organ of the Evangelical division of the Protestant Episcopal Church, in its number for May last, contains an attempted refutation of the article headed *The Church against No-Church*, in our last *Review*. The writer after a preliminary flourish or two, says his "purpose is to have the pleasure of refuting" us. We presume from this that his purpose is to have the pleasure of refuting the main position or leading doctrine of the article. That position or doctrine, as we stated it, is, that, "with this theory alone (the No-Church theory), it is impossible to elicit an act of faith:" or, in other words, that it is not possible to elicit an act of faith, unless we accept the authority of the Roman Catholic Church as the witness and expounder of God's word. Now, to refute this, it is not enough to invalidate our reasoning in this or that particular, but it is necessary to prove positively that an act of faith *can*

*The Episcopal Observer, Vol. I., No. III. Boston. May, 1845. Monthly.

be elicited by those who reject this authority. But this the writer has not done, and, so far as we can see, has not even attempted to do. He cannot, then, whatever else he may have done, have refuted us. All he has done, admitting him to have done all he has attempted, is, to prove, not that we were wrong in asserting the necessity of the authority of the church to elicit an act of faith, but that it is impossible for any one to elicit an act of faith at all, as we shall soon have occasion to see.

But, in point of fact, the writer has not done what he attempted; he has not invalidated our reasoning in a single particular; and if he has succeeded in refuting any one, it is himself. He begins by giving, professedly, a synopsis of our argument; but his synopsis is very imperfect. It leaves out several distinct positions we assumed and attempted to establish as essential to the argument we were conducting. If this is by design, it impeaches the fairness and honesty of the writer; if unintentional, it shows that he did not comprehend the article he undertook to refute, and impeaches his capacity.

Our readers will recollect that we begin our argument by assuming, that, in order to be saved, to be acceptable to God, to enter into life, it is necessary to be a Christian. We then proceed to establish, 1. That, in order to be a Christian, it is necessary to be a believer, to believe *somewhat;* 2. That this somewhat is *truth, not falsehood;* 3. That the truth we are to believe is the truth Jesus Christ taught or revealed; and, 4. That this truth, pertains, in part, at least, to the supernatural order. Now, the second position, namely, that, in order to be a Christian believer, it is necessary to believe *truth, not falsehood*, the *Episcopal Observer* entirely omits, and takes no notice of it, in its attempted refutation of us. Why is this? The *Episcopal Observer* cannot suppose we inserted this proposition without a design, or that it is of no importance to our argument. The position is both positive and negative, and asserts, that, to be a Christian believer, it is necessary not only to believe truth, but truth without mixture of falsehood. A very important position, and one on which much of our subsequent reasoning depended, and designed to meet the very doctrine contended for by the *Episcopal Observer*,—namely, that we have all the faith required of us, if we believe Christian truth, though we believe it mixed with error, in an inexact or in a false sense.

After having established the four positions just enumer-

ated, we proceed, in the second division of our article, to state the necessary conditions of faith in truths pertaining to the supernatural order, or what we need in order to be able to elicit an act of faith in a revelation of supernatural truth. Under this division, we attempt to establish, 1. That faith demands an authority on which to rest, extrinsic both to the believer and the matter believed; 2. That the only, but sufficient, authority for the *intrinsic* truth of the matter of supernatural revelation is the veracity of God; 3. That a witness to the fact that God has actually revealed the matter in question, that is, a witness to the fact of revelation, is also necessary; 4. That this witness must be not merely a witness to the fact that God has made a revelation, or to the fact of revelation in general, but to the precise revelation in each particular case in which there may be a question of what is or is not the revelation of God,—therefore *an interpreter*, as we expressed ourselves, of the genuine sense of the revelation; 5. That this witness must be universal, subsisting through all times and nations; 6. Unmistakable, with ordinary prudence, by the simple and illiterate; and, 7. Infallible.

Now, of these seven positions, the writer in the *Episcopal Observer* objects expressly to the *fourth*, and, by implication, to the *seventh*. But he takes no notice of our definition of faith, namely, that "*it is a theological virtue, which consists in believing, without doubting, explicitly or implicitly, all the truths Almighty God has revealed, on the veracity of God alone*,"—on which, he must be aware, rests nearly the whole of our argument for the necessity of an infallible witness to the fact of revelation; for, if faith consists in believing *without doubting*, it is obvious that it is impossible to elicit an act of faith on the authority of a fallible witness. It can be possible only where there is no reasonable ground for doubt as to what God has actually revealed; and there always is reasonable ground for doubt, where the reliance is on a fallible witness, that is, a witness that may deceive or be deceived. Our conclusion, then, that the witness must be infallible, or faith is not possible, must be admitted, if our definition of faith is accepted. We were not to be refuted, then, on this point, except by a refutation of our definition of faith. But the writer in the *Episcopal Observer* does not refute this definition, for he does not even notice it. How, then, can he claim to himself the "pleasure" of having refuted us?

But the writer in the *Episcopal Observer* objects strongly

to the *fourth* position of the second division of our article. He says we affirm that we need "an interpreter of the genuine sense of what God has revealed, because God has made faith the condition *sine qua non* of salvation; and if we should mistake the propositions actually contained in God's revelation, or substitute others therefor, since it is only through the proposition we arrive at the matter revealed, we should not believe the revelation God has actually made, *but something else, and something for which we cannot plead the veracity of God, and therefore something for which we have no solid ground of faith.*" The portion of this sentence in Italics the writer discreetly omits in his quotation. Our doctrine was this:—The ground of faith in the truth or matter revealed is the veracity of God revealing it. But when we believe the matter revealed in a false sense, not in its genuine sense, we do not, in fact, believe what is revealed, but something else, and, therefore, something which God has not revealed, and for the truth of which we have not his veracity. Consequently, we need an interpreter, that is, some means, or, as we say in the article, "*some authority*, extrinsic or intrinsic," to say what is or is not the revelation in its genuine sense; which is only saying, what is or is not the revelation Almighty God has actually made. Is it not so? Are we not right in this? The writer in the *Episcopal Observer* says no. He objects to this, because we here, he says, assume "three things . . . . . which need a little looking after: 1. That God's revelation to man is not intelligible. 2. That a human interpreter can make it plain. 3. That, unless the nice theological shades of meaning in God's word are appreciated, one cannot be saved. In general terms, we deny all these propositions." So do we; and, moreover, we deny that we assume, or that our argument implies, either one or another of them.

The *Episcopal Observer* contends that God's revelation is made to us in terms as express and as intelligible as human language can make it. "Natural reason," it says, "teaches us enough of God to know that he is infinitely wise, benevolent, and good. An infinitely wise, benevolent, and good being, in making a revelation to dependent and erring creatures, could not do otherwise than adapt it, in the most perfect manner, to their condition." Be it so; we said as much, more than once, ourselves. But what is "the most perfect manner?" "A revelation," continues the *Episcopal Observer*, "coming from such a being, would be conveyed in

intelligible propositions, so expressed and arranged as to be least liable to be misunderstood." In propositions intelligible through the ministry of the church teaching, we grant it; otherwise, we deny it, *because he has not so conveyed, expressed, and arranged it.* "Then, if a revelation have come from God, it must be as clear and intelligible as human language can make it." Through the same ministry, we concede it; otherwise, we deny it, and for the same reason.

There is no occasion to assert the intelligibleness of divine revelation against us, for that we conceded. The real question at issue is not whether the revelation be intelligible, but whether it be intelligible without the aid of the pastors of the church. The *Episcopal Observer* was bound to show that no such aid is needed, or else not secure the "pleasure" of refuting us. We knew beforehand the only argument he could adduce, and that argument we ourselves adduced and replied to. The *Episcopal Observer* has merely brought against us this objection, without *noticing our reply to it.* We stated, "It may be said that God is just, that he has made us a revelation, commanded us to believe it, and made belief of it the condition *sine qua non* of salvation; but that he would not be just in so doing, if this revelation were not infallibly ascertainable in its genuine sense by the prudent exercise of natural reason." Here is the argument of the *Episcopal Observer*, taken in connexion with what we had previously said of what natural reason teaches us of God, as clearly and as forcibly put as the *Episcopal Observer* itself has put it; and here is our reply:—"Ascertainable by natural reason, *in one method or another*, we grant; by private reason and the Bible alone, we deny; *for God may have made the revelation ascertainable only by a divinely commissioned and supernaturally guided and protected body of teachers, and the office of natural reason to be to judge of the credibility of this body of teachers.*" This reply is conclusive, at least till shown to be inconclusive; consequently the writer in the *Episcopal Oberver* was precluded, by the most ordinary rules of logic and morals, from insisting on the objection, till he had not only noticed, but refuted, the reply. He has done neither. He has taken an objection which we had anticipated and replied to, urged it against us, without deigning to notice our reply, and this he calls refuting us!

The writer in the *Episcopal Observer* proceeds in his argument against a position he says we assume but which

we do not assume, on the assumption that the revelation Almighty God has made to us is made exclusively in the written word, and is made "in intelligible propositions, so expressed and arranged as to be least liable to be misunderstood," "as clear and as intelligible as language can make it." This assumption we met and refuted, or attempted to refute, in our article; but the *Episcopal Observer*, according to its custom, takes no notice of our refutation, or attempted refutation. This assumption is provable only in two ways: 1. *A priori*, by reasoning from the known character of God; 2. *A posteriori*, by reasoning from the character of the revelation actually made. The first method can avail it nothing, for the reason we before assigned, and have just now repeated. We adduced, in our article, several arguments and facts to show that the second method can avail it just as little. These facts and arguments it does not set aside, does not attempt to set aside, for it does not even notice them, or make an effort to show that its assumption may be true in spite of them. And yet it purposed to have the "pleasure" of refuting us! and we are gravely assured by another Episcopal organ, *The Christian Advocate and Witness*, that it really has refuted us, and in a masterly manner turned our logic against us. Really, these Episcopalians have queer notions of what constitutes a refutation of an opponent.

But we deny the assumption of the *Episcopal Observer*, and call upon the writer to reply to the facts and arguments we adduced against it. Will he, in open day, maintain that the several articles of Christian faith, even as he holds them, are expressed in the Sacred Scriptures in propositions as clear and intelligible as human language can make them? He is an Episcopalian, and therefore believes, we are bound to presume, in the Nicene creed. Will he tell us where in the Sacred Scriptures the consubstantiality of the Son to the Father, or the procession of the Holy Ghost from the Father and the Son,—*Filioque*,—is expressed in terms as clear, as intelligible, and as unequivocal as in the creed? It will not be enough to adduce passages which teach or imply one or the other of these doctrines, but he must adduce passages which teach them as expressly, in a manner as clear and intelligible, as they are taught in the creed; for his assumption is, that they are expressed in the Sacred Scriptures in a manner as clear and intelligible as they can be in human language. Adduce the passages, if

you please. You, as an Episcopalian, are bound to admit infant baptism as an article of the Christian faith. Do you find this expressed in the Bible in a manner "as clear and intelligible as human language can make it?" If so, why have you not been able, long ere this, to settle the dispute with your Baptist brethren, who have as much reverence for the Bible as you have, are as learned, and no doubt as honest? If the articles of Christian faith be expressed in the Sacred Scriptures in propositions as clear and intelligible as language can make them, how happens it that men dispute more about their sense as contained in the Sacred Scriptures than they do about their sense as drawn out and defined in the creed? Is there an article of faith held to be fundamental by the *Episcopal Observer* that has not been disputed on what has been conceived to be the authority of Scripture itself? Yet all is in Scripture as clear and as intelligible as human language can make it! Who is at a loss to know what the Catholic Church means by her decisions? Who questions the sense of the dogma as given in her definition of it? If she can define an article of faith so as to end all dispute concerning its sense, so far as she defines it, it follows that articles of faith can be expressed in language,—for her definitions are expressed in language,—so as to preclude uncertainty as to their meaning. But this cannot be said of the articles of faith as expressed and arranged in the Sacred Scriptures, because men have doubted and disputed from the first, and do now doubt and dispute, as to what they are, as is proved by the number of ancient sects, and the some five hundred or more Protestant sects still extant; and also by the violent controversy, concerning what the writer in the *Episcopal Observer* must regard as fundamentals, now raging in his own church, both in this country and in England. Nay, the Scriptures themselves are express against the rash assumption of the *Episcopal Observer*. "And account," says St. Peter, "the long suffering of our Lord is salvation, as also our most dear brother Paul, according to the wisdom given him, hath written to you; as also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things, in which there are certain things *hard to be understood*, which the *unlearned* and unstable wrest, as they do also the *other scriptures*, to their own destruction."—2 Pet. iii, 15, 16. This is to the point. The Scriptures, according to their own declaration, do contain things *hard* to be understood, and which the unlearned wrest to their own destruction

and these are not unessentials, because their misinterpretation involves the destruction of those who misinterpret them. Where is the intelligence, where is the conscience, of this rash writer? Has he no reverence for truth, no fear of God before his eyes, that he hesitates not to give the lie to the Holy Ghost, and to affirm what is so obviously untrue? Let him show as much unanimity among the aforesaid five hundred or more Protestant sects, who all hold the Bible to be the word of God, and profess to take it as their rule of faith and practice, concerning what he himself holds to be fundamentals, as we can show him among Catholics concerning the meaning of the articles of faith the church has defined, and we will listen to his assertion, that the revelation of God, as contained in the Sacred Scriptures,—for this is his meaning,—is "as clear and intelligible as human language can make it;" but till then, we recommend him to moderate his tone, and meditate daily on the solemn fact that a judgment awaits us, and we must all give an account for all our thoughts, *words*, and deeds. An induction contradicted by glaring and lamentable facts is inadmissible; and such is his, that the relation of God, as expressed in the Sacred Scriptures, is "as clear and intelligible as human language can make it." We admit the revelation to be perfectly intelligible in the way and manner, and by the means, intended by the Revealer; but in the way and manner asserted by the *Episcopal Observer*, we deny its intelligibleness, as must every honest man who has seriously undertaken to interpret the Holy Scriptures by the aid of private reason alone.

The writer in the *Episcopal Observer* asserts that we assume "that a human interpreter can make it (divine revelation) plain." We assume no such thing; and moreover, if he is capable of understanding, in any degree, his mother tongue, and has read our article through, he knows that we not only do not, but, with our general doctrine, that we could not. Does he not know, that, throughout the article, we are attempting, among other things, to establish the utter incompetency of a merely human interpreter? Does he not know that we contend for the competency of the church to interpret or declare the revelation of God, only on the ground that she has the promise of the superhuman, the supernatural, guidance and assistance of the Holy Ghost? Does he not know, that, according to all Catholics, it is not the humanity of the church, but the Divinity, whose spouse

she is, that decides in her decisions, and in her interpretations is the interpreter? Prove us wrong in holding this, if you can; but do not assert that we assume, either consciously or unconsciously that the revelation of God can be made plain by a mere human interpreter. It was not for a human interpreter we contended, but for a divine interpreter; and our argument was to prove, that, without a divine interpreter of divine revelation, it is impossible to elicit an act of faith. Will the *Episcopal Observer* remember this? The folly and absurdity it ascribes to us, of contending for a human interpreter, we leave to Low-Churchmen and their dearly beloved children and grandchildren, the No-Churchmen.

The *Episcopal Observer* also charges us with assuming, "that, unless the nice theological shades of meaning in God's word be appreciated, one cannot be saved." There is little pleasure in replying to an opponent who has yet to learn the simplest elements of the matters in debate, and on which he affects to speak as a master. The writer in the *Episcopal Observer* does not appear to have ever read a single elementary work on theology. He appears to be wholly ignorant of any distinction between faith and theology. We said not one word about "nice theological shades of meaning;" we neither said, nor implied in any thing we said, that theology is at all necessary to salvation. We spoke of *faith* as the condition *sine qua non* of salvation, we admit, but not of *theology;* and we contended that the faith must be embraced in its purity and integrity, or one cannot be saved: but not that one cannot be saved unless he appreciates the nice distinctions of theology. Theology and its distinctions belong to science, a science constructed by human reason from principles derived from the light of nature and the supernatural revelation made immediately to faith. It is useful, because, in the ordinary course of divine providence, we cannot have faith, propagate, preserve, and defend faith, without it; for by it, as says St. Augustine, *Fides saluberrima quæ ad veram beatitudinem ducit, gignitur, defenditur, roboratur.** Theology is necessary or useful only as subservient to faith; but faith is indispensable to salvation, as says the blessed apostle, "Without faith it is impossible to please God;" and whoso does not please God, we take it, is not in the way of salvation. As to distinctions or nice shades of meaning in faith, we said nothing about them, for

*Lib. XIV. *De Trin. Cap.* 1.

we were not aware of their existence. Faith is one, a whole, and must be embraced in its purity and integrity, or it is not embraced at all.

"But it is derogatory to the character of God and the interests of religion," says the writer in the *Episcopal Observer*, "to say that the *exact mind* of the Spirit must in every point in revelation be fully seen and acknowledged, as the condition of being saved." On what authority is this said? Does he deny faith to be the condition *sine qua non* of salvation? Of course not, for we assert it in our article, and he takes no exception to our assertion. Must not this be faith in what the Holy Ghost has revealed, that is, in the revelation Almighty God has made? Has not Almighty God made belief of this revelation a necessary condition of salvation? If so, has he made it necessary to believe the *whole*, or only a *part?* In its *exact* sense, or in an *inexact* sense? If you say a part is not necessary to be believed, will you tell us what part? Will you be so obliging as to favor us with a specification, on divine authority, of the portions of revelation which we have the permission of the Holy Ghost to disbelieve or not believe?

That it is necessary to believe the *whole* revelation, as the condition *sine qua non* of salvation, is evident from the very definition we gave of faith, namely, that it is "a theological virtue, which consists in believing *all* the truths God has revealed, on the veracity of God alone." Does the *Episcopal Observer* deny this definition of faith? If it does, why has it not said so, and refuted it by refuting the arguments by which we attempted to sustain it? and, since its purpose was to have the *pleasure* of refuting us, why did it not give and sustain a definition in opposition to ours? Was it a sufficient refutation of us for it to pronounce, as it does, that, in that portion of the article in which we give this definition, we "enter into a bog and flounder till we reach the opposite side?" Was it afraid, if it followed us, it would itself sink in the "bog," stick fast in the "morass?" or was it only the *pleasure*, not the *pain*, of refuting us it promised itself? If faith consist in believing all the truths Almighty God has revealed,—and dare the *Episcopal Observer* assert that it does not?—and if faith be, as the blessed apostle declares, the condition without which we cannot be saved, it follows necessarily that the whole mind of the Spirit, so far as revealed, must be believed, as the condition of being saved. Will the writer in the *Epis-*

copal Observer deny this? Let him do it, and he may possibly find himself in "a bog" to which there is *no* "other side."

But it may be the writer in the *Episcopal Observer* does not mean to assert, that "it is derogatory to the character of God and injurious to the interests of religion" to say, that *all* the truths Almighty God has revealed must be explicitly believed, as the condition of being saved, but simply that it is derogatory, &c., to say they must be explicitly believed in their *exact* sense, as they lie in the mind of the Holy Ghost. We say *explicitly believed*, for this is what he must mean by being "fully seen and acknowledged." What he means to object to is the assertion, that the *exact* mind of the Spirit must be believed as the condition *sine qua non* of salvation. "The exact mind of the Spirit" must mean the entire revelation Almighty God has made, in its *exact sense*, or, as we expressed ourselves, in its genuine sense. Then we can understand by the exact mind of the Spirit neither more nor less than "the pure word of God." Then it is derogatory to the character of God and injurious to the interests of religion to say, that the pure word of God—the revelation in its purity and integrity—must be believed as the condition of being saved. Then, in order not to derogate from the character of God, and not to injure the interests of religion, we must say, the impure word of God, that is, the word of God corrupted by a greater or less admixture of falsehood and error, is sufficient, all that it is necessary to believe, in order to be saved, or to have that faith without which "it is impossible to please God!" Is the *Episcopal Observer* prepared to adopt this conclusion? It must adopt it. It will not allow us to insist on the *exact* mind of the Spirit. But if we do not take the exact mind of the Spirit, we must take the *inexact* mind. The inexact mind, so far forth as inexact, is not the mind of the Spirit at all,—is not the word of God,—is not truth, but falsehood, and therefore of the devil, who is a liar from the beginning, and the father of lies. The inexact mind of the Spirit is the impure or corrupt word of God, the word of God and the words of the devil combined. If it be derogatory to the character of God and injurious to the interests of religion to insist on the necessity to salvation of faith in the *pure* word of God, it must be honorable to the character of God and advantageous to the interests of religion to contend that belief of the impure word, the corrupt

word, the word of God combined with the words of the devil, is sufficient as the condition of being saved! A very comforting doctrine to all classes of errorists; for they all hold the truth, or some portion of truth, but mixed with error,—that is, in an inexact, a false, or a corrupt sense. The *Episcopal Observer's* own church defines the visible church of Christ to be "a congregation of faithful men, in the which the pure word of God is preached." Art. XIX. We suppose they who preach the pure word of God preach it because they hold its belief to be necessary as the condition of being saved. The church of Christ, then, inasmuch as it preaches, and, we presume, insists on, the *pure* word of God, or the exact mind of the Spirit, as necessary to salvation, does that which is "derogatory to the character of God and injurious to the interests of religion!" Happily, however, for the writer in the *Episcopal Observer*, his church is not obnoxious to this charge; for it is unquestionably innocent of the sin of preaching the pure word of God.

After all, this is rather a singular doctrine for a Protestant to *avow*, however consistent it may be for him to *entertain* it. The charge against the church of Rome by the pseudo-reformers was not that it did not hold the word of God, but that it had ceased to hold it in its purity. It had corrupted the word of God, not the written word, not the text, but the sense, the doctrine, that is, "the mind of the Spirit," and therefore had become a corrupt church, in the bosom of which salvation had become impossible, or, at least, exceedingly doubtful. On this ground they pretended to separate from its communion, and on this ground their children have generally attempted to vindicate their separation. But the *Episcopal Observer*, it seems, abandons this ground, and gives the reformers a very unfilial blow. According to this modern Protestant, the fact that a church has corrupted the word of God, and preaches not the pure word, but the impure word, is rather to its credit, and should be a motive for seeking or remaining in its communion, instead of a motive for separating from it. The only good ground of separation, if we accept his doctrine, would be the fact that the church preaches the pure word of God, and commands belief in the exact mind of the Spirit, as the condition of salvation. From such a church it must be one's duty to separate, because such a church derogates from the character of God, and injures the interests of religion. Perhaps it was on this ground, after all, that the reformers

separated from the communion of the Holy See, and on this ground that Protestants generally remain separate from that communion.

But the *Episcopal Observer* not only protests against the necessity of belief in the exact mind of the Spirit, but it contends that the exact mind of the Spirit cannot possibly be communicated to us. "Thoughts may be communicated," it says, "by a written or spoken language; but *perfectly*, *entirely*, *unmistakably*, by neither. To this rule the thoughts of God form no exception. When communicated to erring men, they come clothed under the guise of the erring representative, human language; and of necessity, therefore, are liable, in some of their shades, to be misconceived." So Almighty God himself cannot, if he will, teach us the exact truth, nor make to us a revelation of his will which we may believe without mixture of error! The truth as it is in God cannot be communicated to us; we can never receive what God is pleased to reveal, "*perfectly, entirely, unmistakably;*" but must always misconceive it to a greater or less extent, and substitute, for the mind of the Spirit, our own mind,—for the word of God, our own words, or the words of the devil! And yet, the *Episcopal Observer* tells us, the revelation God has made us is so easy of comprehension, "that the wayfaring man, though a fool, *shall not err therein.*" Nevertheless, Almighty God himself cannot make a revelation that can be perfectly received, that can be embraced without mistakes and misconceptions. It is a convenience, sometimes, when we wish to secure the "pleasure" of refuting an opponent, to have short memories and flexible principles.

But, according to the *Episcopal Observer*, we can never, even by the help of Almighty God, embrace the word of God in its purity and integrity; for, coming to us "clad in the defectible exterior of human language," it must, "by a *law of necessity*, be understood differently by different minds." We can never know precisely what it is God requires us to believe, and we never can believe what he requires us to believe, without mixing with it more or less of error and falsehood. Be it so. Will the *Episcopal Observer* oblige us, then, by telling us how far we may combine with the word of God, or substitute for it, our own words, or those of the devil, without danger to the soul? Will he tell us, *on divine authority*, where is the exact boundary, on one side of which mistakes and misconcep-

tions, errors and falsehoods, are harmless, and on the other side of which they are destructive? Will he give us some rule by which we may always know whether we are on the right side or the wrong side? The rule is important, and we pray this Protestant theologian, who proposes to himself the very great pleasure of refuting us, to give us the slight pleasure of having this rule, so that we may not only know whether he really has refuted us, but also whether we have more or less error than we may with safety entertain.

But if we cannot receive the revelation of God without mistaking or misconceiving it, how is it possible for us to know whether we have the faith Almighty God requires of us or not? If we mistake on one point why may we not on another? And if we are always liable to err, if even Almighty God cannot set us right, because he can speak to us only through human language, which is always and necessarily a distorting medium, where is faith, or even the possibility of faith? Faith is to believe *without doubting*, and is possible only where there is absolute certainty. But where there is a liability to err, nay, a necessity to mistake and misconceive, there is and can be no absolute certainty, but is and necessarily must be doubt, and, therefore, no faith. If the *Episcopal Observer* is right in its doctrine, faith is impossible. It clearly shows, then, that, on its premises, faith, properly so called, is impossible,—the very conclusion to which, we stated, in advance, we intended to force it and all who reject the authority of the Catholic Church as the witness and expounder of God's word. Yet it claims "the pleasure" of having refuted us!

We can understand now, why, in his synopsis of our argument, the writer in the *Episcopal Observer* leaves out our definition of faith, and our position that what we are to believe is *truth, not falsehood.*. If faith be to believe without doubting, it is not possible without absolute certainty, and absolute certainty is possible only in the case of absolute truth; and absolute truth he foresaw he was not likely to get, without going to Rome; for, without going to Rome, he knew he could, at best, have only truth mixed with falsehood. To controvert our definition of faith, or to refute the arguments by which we sustained our position, that what we are to believe is "truth, not falsehood," was no easy matter, and not safe to be attempted; and yet he must have the pleasure of refuting us!

The whole controversy between Catholics and Protestants turns on the questions here involved. Catholics say that Almighty God has made us a revelation, and commanded us to believe it, without doubting, *in its integrity and genuine sense*, as the condition *sine qua non* of salvation. Protestants also say God has made us a revelation, and commanded us to believe it without doubting, as the condition *sine qua non* of salvation, *but*, virtually, if not expressly, *that he does not command us to believe it in its integrity and genuine sense, but only so much of it as commends itself to our own minds and hearts, and in the sense in which it pleases us to understand it.* They are obliged to say this, or acknowledge the authority of the Catholic Church, and condemn themselves, as not having that faith without which they cannot be saved.

The presumption, to say the least, is in favor of the Catholics for we cannot reasonably suppose that the Holy Ghost reveals what he does not require us to believe, nor that he can consent that we should believe his word in any sense but his own. The Protestants are, then, presumptively in the wrong, and consequently, the *onus probandi* rests on them. They can justify themselves only by producing, on divine authority, a specification of the portions of God's word they have the permission of the Holy Ghost to disbelieve or not believe, according to their own caprice; and also the permission of the Holy Ghost to believe his word in their own sense, rather than in his. God has made us a revelation; this they admit, as well as we. He has commanded us to believe it; this they admit as well as we. He has made belief of it a necessary condition of salvation; this they dare not deny. What, then, is the fair presumption from these premises? Is it not, that God commands belief in his revelation in its purity and integrity as the condition of salvation? Unquestionably. Then, unless you have his authority for saying that he neither requires you to believe all he has revealed, nor to believe what you do believe in its true sense, you are convicted of not having the faith he commands, unless you actually believe his whole revelation, and in its true sense.

Moreover, the ground on which you are to believe this revelation is the veracity of God alone. Now, this ground is sufficient ground of faith in all that God has revealed, and you can with no more propriety refuse to believe one portion of it than another. To refuse to believe this revela-

tion is to make God a liar, and you make him a liar in refusing to believe one article, as much as you would in refusing to believe the whole. You must, then, believe the whole, or you make God, in your own mind, a liar; and are you prepared to maintain that he who charges God with falsehood, which is to blaspheme the Holy Ghost, is in the way of salvation?

So must you also believe the revelation in God's sense; *for it is only in his sense that it is his word.* If you put a meaning upon a man's words different from the meaning he puts upon them, they cease to be his words, and become yours. So, when you put a meaning upon God's word different from the meaning he puts upon it, it ceases to be his word, and becomes your word, and you believe then the truth not as it is in God, but as it is in you. You must, then, believe the revelation in its true sense, or you do not believe the revelation Almighty God has made. Is it not remarkable that Protestants seem never to be aware of this?

Again, God commands *faith* in his revelation. But faith is to believe without doubting, and is, as we have seen, possible only on condition of infallible evidence, which leaves no room for doubt, but gives absolute certainty. The certainty of faith, though different in kind, must be equal in degree to the certainty of knowledge, or it is not faith. But this certainty is not possible in case of error or falsehood. Error or falsehood cannot be infallibly evidenced; for, if it could, it would not be error or falsehood, but truth. It follows, therefore, that the requisite degree of evidence to elicit faith is possible only in the case of absolute truth. But the revelation of God, when misinterpreted, when taken not in its exact sense, is not absolute truth, and therefore cannot be so evidenced to the mind as to elicit faith. But we must have faith, or be eternally damned. Then you must take the revelation in its exact sense, or not be saved.

Do you reply, that faith, in this sense, is impossible, because it is impossible to have infallible certainty of the exact mind of the Spirit? This is a plain begging of the question. Impossible, on your ground, we admit; but not therefore necessarily on every ground. Your objection merely proves that you cannot, as Protestants, elicit an act of faith, which is what we contend; but when you say *therefore* we cannot elicit faith at all, you assume that your ground is the true and only ground, which is what we deny,

and what it is your business to prove. Because you cannot elicit faith, it does not follow that faith cannot be elicited. God has commanded it, as you yourselves dare not deny; but God cannot command what is impossible; therefore faith is possible. Then the fact that it is not possible on your ground, only proves that you are wrong.

One of the objections we brought against the Bible, as the witness to the fact of revelation, was, that, without an infallible authority, distinct from the Bible, it is impossible to prove the *sufficiency* of the Scriptures. We contended, for several reasons, which we gave, that they who take the Bible, as interpreted by private reason alone, for the only and sufficient rule of faith, are bound to prove that their rule is sufficient from the Sacred Scriptures themselves. But this they cannot do, for the Scriptures nowhere assert their own sufficiency. The *Episcopal Observer* contends that they are not bound to prove the sufficiency of the Scriptures, but that we are bound to prove their *insufficiency!* But it nowhere takes up or replies to our objections, and nowhere shows on what principle we are bound to prove a negative. Doubtless, if we deny a proposition, we are bound to justify our denial by adducing a good reason for it; but in most cases it is sufficient to allege the fact that the affirmative proposition is not proved. Protestants assert the sufficiency of the Scriptures; it is their business to prove that sufficiency, and by divine authority, too,—a thing they never have done, and a thing they know perfectly well, if they know any thing of the subject, they never can do. By what right do they assume a position, without offering a single particle of evidence appropriate in the case to prove it, and then call upon us to disprove it? Is rational culture so neglected among Protestants, and even Protestant theologians, that they have no more sense of sound reasoning than this implies?

But we went further, and *disproved* the sufficiency of the Scriptures, which was more than our argument required. Faith is to believe, without doubting, *all* the truths Almighty God has revealed, and, therefore, is possible only on condition that we have absolute certainty that what we receive as the revelation of God is his revelation, and the whole of his revelation, as we proved before and have now proved again. The witness, to be adequate, sufficient, must, then, testify to the fact that the matter believed or to be believed is the revelation, and the whole revelation. Now,

to this last fact, namely, that they contain the whole revelation, or the whole word of God, the Scriptures do not testify. Therefore, they are insufficient, for this very reason, if for no other. This is the argument adduced in our article, and, certainly, before the *Episcopal Observer* can legitimately claim the *pleasure* of having refuted us and the right to assert the sufficiency of the Scriptures, it is bound to set this argument aside. But it does not even notice it.

The *Episcopal Observer*, we apprehend, does not understand what a witness to the *fact* of revelation means. He seems to reason on the supposition, that, when we contended for a witness to the fact of revelation, we meant merely that we must have a witness to the fact that God has made a revelation. We assure him this was not our meaning. We mean by the fact of revelation, not simply the fact that God has made a revelation, but that he has revealed that this or that is a fact; and we mean by a witness to the fact of revelation, not merely a witness to revelation in general, but to each particular point of the revelation. Assume, for instance, that the mystery of the Trinity is the point in question. The ground of faith in this mystery is the veracity of God revealing it. But before we can know that we have God's veracity for the truth of this adorable mystery, we must know that God has revealed it, that is, the *fact* that he has revealed it. Now, the witness we demand is a witness to this fact, and to the like fact in every other case; and unless we have such a witness—an infallible witness, too—in each particular case, we have and can have no faith. Does the *Episcopal Observer* understand this? Will it deny that a witness, and an infallible witness, in the sense here defined, is the condition *sine qua non* of faith? Can it say that God has revealed this or that article of faith, if it have no witness to the fact that God has revealed it? Can it say it with absolute certainty without an infallible witness? and if it cannot say with infallible certainty that God has revealed it, can it believe, without doubting, that he has revealed it? No man has faith, till he can say with St. Augustine, "O God, if I am deceived, *Thou* hast deceived me," and this, too, in every single article of faith. Who can say this, unless he has infallible evidence that the particular article, which is in question, is actually God's word?

We must, then, have the witness, or faith is impossible. What is this witness? We stated that it must be, 1. Reason; 2. The Bible; 3. Private illumination; or, 4. The apostolic

ministry, or *Ecclesia docens*. We demonstrated that it could not be the first three, and, therefore, inferred that it must be the fourth, or we have no witness. The *Episcopal Observer* nowhere meets our arguments; but merely cavils at one or two collateral points. It does not bring out, clearly and distinctly, any doctrine of its own ; but, so far as we can understand its loose statements, it assumes that the witness is the Bible, interpreted, not by private reason, but by private illumination, or what it calls "the internal monitor." We prove by historical testimony that the Scriptures contain the revelation of God, and by the internal monitor we ascertain its sense.

But, 1 We cannot, by historical testimony, prove that the Bible contains the *whole* revelation of God; and yet, assuming a revelation to have been made, and belief of it enjoined as the condition of being saved, we can demonstrate, as we have shown, by reason, that it is necessary to believe, and to know that we believe, the whole.

2. There are many false prophets gone out into the world, and we are not to believe every spirit, but to try the spirits if they be of God.—1 St. John, iv. 1. There must, then, be some criterion by which we may distinguish the true from the false. This cannot be the internal monitor, *because that is precisely what we are to try.* What is this criterion ? The blessed apostle tells us. "We are of God. He that knoweth God heareth us. He that is not of God heareth not us. By this we know the spirit of truth from the spirit of error."—*Ib.* 6. If you have the spirit of truth, you hear the apostles, that is, abide in the apostolic doctrine and communion. You must, then, prove that you abide in the apostolic doctrine and communion, before you have proved your right to follow your " internal monitor."

3. We are commanded to give a reason to them that ask us of the hope that is in us. But, according to the *Episcopal Observer* itself, this inward witness is authority only for the individual himself, and, therefore, no reason to be assigned to others.

4. All men are required to believe the revelation God has made, on pain of eternal condemnation. To believe the revelation is to believe it in its integrity and genuine sense. But it must be propounded to those who are as yet unbelievers in this sense, as the condition of their believing it. Now, it must be propounded with infallible evidence that it is the revelation of God, or without it. If without it, un-

believers are justifiable in rejecting it, which no Christian can admit. But if the sense is to be ascertained only by the inward monitor of the individual, it cannot be propounded with the infallible evidence required, for this evidence must be evidence to the revelation in its genuine sense, since otherwise that which is evidenced would not be the word of God, but something else,—the words of man, or of the devil.

5. The internal monitor is the Holy Ghost. Is the Holy Ghost given to unbelievers? If you say yes, we demand the proof, which the *Episcopal Observer* admits cannot be given. If you say no, then, we ask, where is the sin of unbelievers in that they are unbelievers? The revelation is not *credible* save in its true sense. They who are not privately illuminated by the Holy Ghost know not and cannot know it in its true sense. Then they cannot believe it. Yet they are, by all Christian theology, declared sinners in consequence of their unbelief. Is a man a sinner for not doing what he has not the ability to do?

6. But lastly, the practical effects of this doctrine prove that it is not of God. It paves the way for lawless enthusiasm, and the introduction of all manner of false doctrines. Every enthusiast may allege that he has the Holy Ghost, and though what he teaches is as false as hell and wicked as the devil, you have no means of convicting him. He speaks by the Holy Ghost; would you shut the mouth of the Holy Ghost? He follows the Spirit; would you resist the Spirit? Each man is the *Ecclesia docens*, and professes to speak with infallible authority. What will you do? What will you say? Your mouth is shut. Does not the Spirit witness to itself? What right have you to oppose your Spirit to his? Has he not as high authority as you have? You say, No; he says, Yes; and how are you to prove your *no* is above his *yes*? What is to decide between you? The Bible? Not so fast. Your rule of faith is the Bible interpreted by the internal monitor. He appeals to the Bible, as well as you; and the question is not, whether the Bible be or be not the word of God, but whether he or you have its genuine sense. What does the Bible mean? You, on the authority of what you call the Holy Ghost, say it means this; he, on what he alleges to be the same authority, says it means that. Which of you is right? What is to decide? Nothing. You cannot convict him, nor he you. There you are, eternally at loggerheads, and the most damnable heresies are

rife in the land, and ruining the people, both for this world and for that which is to come. This is one of the glorious effects of your "glorious reformation!" Can a doctrine, leading to such disastrous consequences, be a doctrine from God? And has Almighty God provided no safer rule for the instruction of his children in that faith he requires them to believe as the condition of being saved? Out upon the foul blasphemy! Say it not, but rather go and sit in sackcloth and ashes at the foot of the cross, look on him ye have crucified, and weep in silence over your folly and wickedness.

The *Episcopal Observer* complains of us, that we assumed, in our argument, that Protestants admit that God has made us a revelation, and that we did not reason with them as if they were Jews, Mahometans, or infidels. Perhaps we were wrong in this, but it will do us, we hope, the justice to acknowledge, that we did not not assume them to be *believers* in the revelation of God; we only assumed that they *profess* to believe it, at least, some portions of it. We have known Protestants too long and too intimately to be guilty of the folly of inferring their *belief* from their *profession*. We hope this explanation will satisfy the *Episcopal Observer*, and induce it to withdraw its complaint. We assumed that Protestants admit that God has made us a revelation, and that the Scriptures, so far as we had in our argument occasion to appeal to that revelation, contain an authentic record of it. This they profess; and in reasoning with them, we supposed it would be more respectful to take them at their profession than it would be to go behind it for their actual belief or want of belief. If, however, they object to this, prefer to have us reason with them as if they were infidels, and really believe that this would be more in accordance with truth, we will hereafter do our best to accommodate them.

On one point the *Episcopal Observer* seems really to believe that it has caught us in a difficulty, and its antics on the occasion are quite diverting. We contended that we cannot elicit an act of faith without an infallible witness to the fact of revelation, and that this witness cannot be reason, the Bible, nor private illumination, but is and must be the apostolic ministry. On this, the *Episcopal Observer* breaks out: —"We have, then, no proof of the fact of revelation, unless we can find it in the testimony of the apostolic ministry. Very well, Mr. Brownson, as the first important matter is *the fact that we have a revelation*, bring forward the witness.

The witness! the witness! we must have the witness!" With all our heart, dear Mr. *Episcopal Observer;* only contain yourself a moment. You call for a witness to the fact that God has made us a revelation, and to this fact you imply that we have no witness to produce but the apostolic ministry. With your leave, this is a mistake. There is a wide difference between what we call the fact of revelation, and the fact that God has made us a revelation. To the fact of revelation, that is, to prove what is or is not the revelation Almighty God has made, the apostolic ministry is *to us* the only competent witness; but to the fact that Almighly God has made a revelation, it is not, nor did we pretend or imply that it is, the only witness. To this fact we adduce as the witness HISTORICAL TESTIMONY, by which we prove that there was such a person as Jesus Christ, and that he wrought miracles which prove him to have spoken by divine authority. Here is the witness you demand. Do you object to its testimony? Bring forward, then, your objections, and we will reply to them when we come to defend the church against infidels.

If the *Episcopal Observer* had read our article from page 369 to page 373 it would, perhaps, have suspected that we could extricate ourselves more easily from the difficulty it has conjured up, than it appears to have imagined. It is often a convenience to understand your opponent, before attempting to refute him,—though sometimes an inconvenience, we admit, if one is resolved beforehand, come what will, to have the "pleasure" of refuting him. The apostolic ministry, existing, as it has, in uninterrupted succession through eighteen hundred years, is itself, by the very fact of its existence, a proof of the fact that Almighty God has made us a revelation; but we did not adduce it, nor are we obliged, by the logical conditions of our argument, to adduce it, in proof of this fact; for we prove this fact independently of its authority, by the historical testimony by which we establish the authenticity of the Scriptures as historical documents.

The *Episcopal Observer* accuses us of reasoning in a *vicious* circle, because we assert that the apostolic ministry is the only competent witness to the fact of revelation, and yet appeal to the Scriptures in proof of the fact that a revelation has been made, and to determine the commission of the ministry. We confess we can detect no *vicious* circle in this. The fact that a revelation has been made was evidenced to those who lived

in the age in which it was made by miracles, which accredited those by whom it was made, as we showed in our article. We appeal to the Scriptures, in the first instance, not to ascertain what this revelation is, but as a simple historical record of the miracles and other facts, which prove that a revelation has been made, or that God has really spoken to man. It is perfectly legitimate to say, the apostolic ministry is the only witness competent to say what it is God has or has not spoken, and yet appeal to the Scriptures as historical doctrines to prove that he has spoken. Here is no *vicious* circle.

Nor do we reason in a *vicious* circle when we assume the apostolic ministry to be the only witness to the fact of revelation, and yet adduce the Scriptures as historical documents in proof of the commission of the ministry. Because we do not first assume the authority of the ministry as the only proof of the Scriptures as historical documents, and then adduce the Scriptures in proof of the commission which authorizes it to testify to that authenticity. We take the Scriptures, already proved to be authentic historical documents, so far forth as historical in their character, at least, so far forth as we have occasion to use them in the argument, to prove one simple historical fact, namely, the commission which Jesus Christ gave to his apostles; and then we take the ministry, proved, through the commission of the apostles, to be apostolic, as the witness to the fact and the expounder of revelation, whether contained in the Scriptures or deposited elsewhere. Here is no *vicious* circle, and we, say so on the authority of the *Episcopal Observer* itself. We accused the advocates of private illumination with reasoning in a *vicious* circle, when they take the witness to prove the Scriptures, and then the Scriptures to prove the witness. Not at all, says the *Episcopal Observer:* "For while we take the Scriptures to prove the witness, we do not take the witness to prove the *truth* of the Scriptures, but their *sense.* The establishment of the fact of their existence, as the record of God's revealed will, is antecedent to their use to prove the witness, and independent of his testimony." This, though not a complete reply to us,—because, as a matter of fact, the establishment of the existence of the Scriptures as the record of *God's revealed will* is not antecedent to their use to prove the witness, since the fact that they are the record of the *revealed will* of God in its purity and integrity is one of the facts to which the witness is to testify,—

is nevertheless a valid distinction, and a complete refutation of the *Episcopal Observer's* charge against us. For, while we take the Scriptures *as historical documents*, to prove the commission of the apostolic ministry, we do not take the apostolic ministry to prove that the Scriptures are authentic historical documents, but to prove what is or is not the word which Almighty God has spoken. The establishment of the fact of their existence as authentic historical documents is antecedent to their use to prove the commission of the apostolic ministry, and independent of its testimony. The blunder of the *Episcopal Observer* comes from confounding the fact of the existence of the Scriptures as authentic historical documents with the fact of their authority as a record of revelation.

The *Episcopal Observer*, however, is not to be so easily balked of the "pleasure" of refuting us.

"We want no easier task than to establish false religions on the principle here laid down. There would be no difficulty to get the appointment of a body of pastors and teachers, and then to find witnesses to testify to the *fact of the appointment.* And then, if this body of teachers were allowed to say that such and such books contained the record of a revelation from God, we could not only have as many false teachers as we wanted, but a correspondent number of spurious Bibles. If the lying 'witness' swear to a false revelation, the untrue revelation would of course vouch for the appointment of the witness. It is easy enough, then, to bring historical testimony to the appointment of a witness; but the *authority* of the witness—is it from heaven, or of men? If you say, of men, then, why believe the testimony? If from heaven, then it is a *revealed* fact, and on your principles cannot be known but by the testimony of the 'witness.' Bishop Sherlock, in his day, fell in with just such reasoners as Mr. Brownson, and pushed them around the circle after this manner: 'The Scriptures are very intelligent to honest and diligent readers, in all things necessary to salvation; and if they be not, I desire to know how we shall find out the Church; for certainly the Church has no charter but what is in the Scriptures; and then, if we must believe the Church before we can believe or understand the Scriptures, we must believe the Church before we can possibly know whether there be a church or not! If we prove the Church by the Scriptures, we must believe and understand the Scriptures before we can know the Church. If we believe and understand the Scriptures upon the authority and interpretation of the Church, considered as a church, then we must know the Church before the Scriptures. The Scripture cannot be known without the Church, nor the Church without the Scripture, and yet one of them must be known first; yet neither of them can be known first, according to these principles, which is such an absurdity, as all the art of the world can never palliate.'

"That Mr. Brownson may have no ground to say he is treated unfairly in this matter, we give him leave to hang upon just which horn of the dilemma he may choose; but as for hanging upon both, we insist that he shall do no such thing."—pp. 138, 139.

With the *Episcopal Observer's* permission, we will, at present, hang on neither horn. To the extract from Bishop Sherlock we reply, that the Scriptures, as authentic historical documents, are logically, though not chronologically, in our argument, before the church as a divinely commissioned body; but the church, as the divinely commissioned witness and expounder of the word of God, is both logically and chronologically before the Scriptures, for, as a matter of fact, the church is older than the Scriptures.

The divine *authority* of the commission is inferred from the fact that it was given by Jesus Christ, proved, by the miracles he performed, to speak by divine authority. The fact that he wrought miracles, and the fact that he gave the commission, are both historical facts, and provable by historical testimony, without our being obliged to appeal to the authority of the witness.

But the *authority* of the commission, if of God, is a *revealed* fact. If revealed, it can be proved only by the authority of the apostolic ministry, because that is the only witness we acknowledge to the fact of revelation. Then we must assume the divine authority of the commission as the condition of proving it, which is absurd; or we must admit some other witness than the apostolic ministry, and then we contradict ourselves, and our whole reasoning falls to the ground. This objection was urged against us by the *Christian World*, one of the organs of the Unitarians. The reply is simple and easy. The apostolic ministry is nothing but the continuation of Christ's own ministry while he was on the earth; and the church teaching, which we have called the apostolic ministry, was, while he was on earth, in him. But in him its authority to teach is not established by the commission to the apostles, but by the miracles he wrought. We take the authority of the church teaching in him while he was on earth, proved by miracles to be of God, to establish the divine authority of the commission to the apostles. Consequently, we neither deny the apostolic ministry to be the only witness, nor do we fall into the absurdity of assuming the divine authority of the witness as the condition of proving its divine authority. Will the *Episcopal Observer* tell us on which horn of his imagined dilemma we now hang?

The commission to the apostles created no new ministry, but simply provided for the continuance, unto the consummation of the world, of the visible ministry our blessed Saviour had himself exercised while on the earth. "As my Father hath sent me, so send I you." When he was on earth the witness was visible in him, now it is visible in the body of the pastors and teachers of the Roman Catholic Church, but, though visible under other conditions, it is one and the same; "For, behold," says our blessed Saviour, "I am with you all days unto the consummation of the world." He is the witness, and testifies through them. Does the *Episcopal Observer* ask a better witness? If it does, it must find him, for we never pledged ourselves to produce a better.

One point more we notice, and then take our leave of this *Episcopal Observer*, till we hear from him again. Our readers will recollect the argument we used to identify the *Ecclesia docens*, or church teaching, with the Roman Catholic ministry.

"It is the Roman Catholic ministry. It can be no other. It cannot be the Greek Church. The Greek Church was formerly in communion with the Church of Rome, and made one corporation with it. The Church of Rome was then the true church, *Ecclesia docens*, or it was not. If not, the Greek Church is false, in consequence of having communed with a false church. If it was, the Greek Church is false, because it separated from it. So take either horn of the dilemma, the Greek Church is false, and its ministry not the apostolic ministry which inherits the promises. The same reasoning will apply with equal force to any of the Oriental sects not in communion with the see of Rome; and, *a fortiori*, to all the modern Protestant sects. Therefore, the Roman Catholic ministry is the apostolic corporation, because this corporation can be no other."

Upon this the *Episcopal Observer* remarks:—

"It is one of the easiest things in the world to make out a false conclusion, if one can be allowed to slip a false premise into the process of induction. There are so many violations of the rules of logic in the above paragraph, that the reader would hardly have patience to follow us in their exposure. Precisely the same reasoning, in the same words, with only a slight interchange of terms, will best show its absurdity.

"'It is the ministry of the Greek Church. It can be no other. It cannot be the Roman Catholic ministry. The Roman Catholic Church was formerly in communion with the Greek Church, and made one corporation with it. The Greek Church was then the true church, *Ecclesia docens*, or it was not. If not, the Church of Rome is false, in consequence of having communed with a false church. If it was, the Church of Rome is false, because it separated from it. So, take either horn of the

dilemma, the Church of Rome is false, and its ministry not the apostolic ministry which inherits the promises,' &c."—p. 141.

Now, will it be credited that we anticipated this retort and replied to it? Yet such is the fact. Here is what we said :—

"You object, in behalf of the Greek Church, that Rome separated from her, not she from Rome. This we deny. It is historically certain, that the Greek Church, prior to the final separation, agreed with the Church of Rome on the matters (the Supremacy of the Pope and the Procession of the Holy Ghost) which were made the pretexts for separation. In the separation, the Greek Church denied what she had before asserted, while Rome continued to assert the same doctrine after as before. Therefore the Greek Church was the dissentient party. Prior to the separation, the Greek Church agreed with the Roman in submitting to the papal authority. In the separation, the Greek Church threw off this authority, while the Roman continued to submit to it. Therefore the Greek Church was the separatist.

"You insist, that, though the act of separation may, indeed, have been formally the act of the Greek Church, yet the separation was really on the part of Rome, who had corrupted the faith, and rendered separation from her necessary to the purity of the Christian Church. But, if this be so, whatever the corruptions of the faith Rome had been guilty of, the Greek Church participated in them during her communion with Rome. If they vitiated the Latin Church, they equally vitiated the Greek. Then both had failed, and the true church, which we have seen is indefectible, must have been somewhere else. Then the Greek Church could become a true church by separating from the communion of the Latin Church only on condition of coming into communion with the true church. But it came into communion with no church. Therefore, the Greek Church, at any rate, is false."

Yet the *Episcopal Observer* nowhere notices the fact that we had thus replied in advance, nor even that we were aware of the objection. It has not noticed these replies, express to its objection, and yet it claims to have refuted us! Yes, it has refuted us, by urging the objections we ourselves brought, but without noticing our answers! This may be a refutation in the Protestant sense, but, thank God! it is not in the Catholic sense. The conduct of the *Episcopal Observer*, in this respect, we shall not trust ourselves to characterize as it deserves, nor shall we suffer it to surprise us. Deprived, as the writer is, by the simple fact that he is a Protestant, of the ordinary means of divine grace, nothing better was to be expected of him. He has a cause to maintain, which does not admit of candor and truthfulness, honesty and fair dealing, and we should be more surprised

to find him exercising such virtues than we are by finding him sinning against them.

It is worthy of note that this Episcopal writer has passed over the articles in our *Review* against his own church, and, churchman as he professes to be, has entered the lists only against an article the main design of which was to defend the church against no-church. It is also worthy of note, that the objections he has brought against us were nearly all brought previously in the *Christian Register* and *Christian World*, the two weekly organs of the no-church Unitarians. What does this indicate? Are Unitarians and Episcopalians acting in concert? or are we to infer that a common dread of Catholicity is combining all the various Protestant sects against the Catholic Church? This last seems to us not improbable. The signs of the times seem to indicate that the several tribes of Goths, Vandals, Huns, and other barbarians, are forming a league for a new invasion of Rome. Well, be it so. "He that dwelleth in heaven shall laugh at them, and the Lord shall deride them." The Episcopalians may read their destiny in that of the old Donatists, whom, in many respects, they resemble; and all the Protestant sects combined are not so formidable to the church as were, at one period, the old Arians. The church triumphed over the Arians; she will triumph over the Protestants. A union whose principle is hatred will not long subsist, but will soon break asunder. Protestantism is doomed. The devil may be very active and full of wrath, and utter great swelling words, for a season, because he knows that his time is short; but Protestantism must go the way of all the earth. The Lord will remember mercy, and will not much longer afflict the nations, but will recall them to the bosom of his church.

FAITH NOT POSSIBLE WITHOUT THE CHURCH.*

[From Brownson's Quarterly Review for January, 1846.]

The *Episcopal Observer* does not appear to comprehend what it is it must do, in order to refute the argument urged againt Protestants in the article headed *The Church against No-Church*. That argument, formally stated, is,—According to the admissions of Protestants themselves, it is not possible to be saved without eliciting an act of faith.† But it is not possible to elicit an act of faith without the Roman Catholic Church. Therefore, without the Roman Catholic Church, it is not possible to be saved. As Protestants concede the major, it is evident they can set aside the conclusion only by denying the minor, and proving affirmatively that an act of faith *can* be elicited without the Roman Catholic Church.

The *Episcopal Observer*, however, contends that it will refute us, if it succeed in proving that an act of faith cannot be elicited *with* the Roman Catholic Church. It supposes the argument may be retorted, and the question made to turn on the merits of Catholicity, instead of the merits of Protestantism. But in this the editor labors under a mistake, for the point at issue is not what is possible *with* Catholicity; but what is possible *without* it. The argument puts Protestantism on the defensive, and requires her to vindicate herself. She cannot retort upon her accuser; because, even

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* *The Episcopal Observer*. Boston and Baltimore. August, 1845.

†The impossibility of being saved without *eliciting* faith, that is, without the *act* of faith, assumed here and throughout the whole argument, is, of course, to be res ricted to adults, or persons in whom reason is so far developed as to render them morally responsible for their acts. It is true, universally, that it is impossible to be saved without faith, "for without faith it is impossible to please God," Heb. xi. 6, and "he that believeth not shall be condemned," St. Mark, xvi. 16; but it is not universally true that it is impossible to be saved without *eliciting* faith; for infants are saved by the infused *habit* of faith received in the sacrament of Baptism, without the *act* of faith, of which they are not capable. Nevertheless, restricted to those who have attained to that age in which they become morally responsible for their acts, the assertion in the text is strictly true; and it is only as so restricted we understand it, or wish to have it understood.

were she to prove her accuser guilty, she would not establish her own innocence.

The Protestant denies the Catholic Church, and does all in his power to destroy her. Be it so. We do not, in our argument, undertake the defence of the church against him; but call upon him to establish the sufficiency of Protestantism for salvation. He dare not affirm that salvation is possible without faith. But faith, we tell him, out of the Catholic Church, is not possible. He must deny this, and prove that it is possible out of the Catholic Church, or else admit that in denying the Catholic Church he denies the possibility of faith, and, therefore, of salvation. It avails him nothing, even if he prove that faith is not possible with the Roman Catholic Church; for, until he proves its possibility without it, he can conclude from the fact that it not possible with it only that it is not possible at all.

The *Episcopal Observer* cannot deny this, but it imagines that in an argument with us it can relieve itself of the necessity of proving affirmatively that faith is elicitable without the church, by adopting the *argumentum ad hominem*. "Mr. Brownson," it says, p. 325, "assumes in the outset, as well as we, that an act of faith can be elicited in *some* way. ..... If we shut the mouth of his witness, he must fall back on Protestant ground, or become a faithless infidel." If we were so disposed, we could concede the *Episcopal Observer's* premises and deny its conclusion. If faith be possible in *some* way, and not possible on Catholic ground, it must be possible on Protestant ground or on *some other*, we admit. But, for aught the *Episcopal Observer* shows to the contrary, there may be some other than the Protestant ground on which it is elicitable. Therefore, it does not follow, that, even were it to shut the mouth of our witness, we must either become Protestants or infidels.

But the *Episcopal Observer* has no right to say that we assume in the outset than an act of faith can be elicited in some way, and therefore must admit, that, if not elicitable in the way we allege, it must be in some other way; for we assume no such thing. We assert in the outset, and we labor throughout the argument to prove, than an act of faith is elicitable in *no* way, but by the authority of the Roman Catholic Church; and, if in any part of the argument we reason on the assumption of its possibility, it is only on the ground that its possibility is conceded by Protestants in their assumption of the possibility of salvation.

An analysis of the whole argument of the article in question, so far as it bears directly against Protestants, will give us the following:

1. According to the admissions of Protestants, it is not possible to be saved without eliciting an act of faith.

But it is not possible to elicit an act of faith without the Roman Catholic Church. Therefore, without the Roman Catholic Church, it is not possible to be saved.

2. According to the admissions of Protestants themselves, it is possible to elicit an act of faith, since they admit the possibility of salvation, and that salvation is not possible without faith.

But it is not possible to elicit an act of faith without the Roman Catholic Church. Therefore, it must be possible to elicit an act of faith with the Roman Catholic Church.

The major, in both instances, is assumed to be conceded by Protestants. The dispute, then, must turn on the minor; for, admitting both premises, no one will dream of denying the conclusion. The *Episcopal Observer*, then, evidently cannot refute us in the way it imagines. The argument with which it proposes to refute us, if we may be allowed to reduce it to form, is,—It is impossible to be saved without eliciting an act of faith; *transeat*, or we concede it. But it is not possible to elicit an act of faith *with* the Roman Catholic Church. Therefore, it is possible to elicit an act of faith, or to be saved, without the Roman Catholic Church.

But this argument is faulty, for the conclusion does not follow from the premises; because faith, if not elicitable with the Roman Catholic Church, may not be elicitable at all. The *Episcopal Observer*, in order to refute us, must go a step further, and maintain this argument, namely:—It is impossible to be saved without eliciting an act of faith; *transeat*, or we concede it: But an act of faith *is* elicitable without the Roman Catholic Church. Therefore, it is possible to be saved without the Roman Catholic Church.

This argument, if sustained, would be good against the argument we adduced, because it is its direct negative; but it would not, after all, be conclusive against Catholicity. The conclusion follows *ad hominem*, not necessarily; for there may be something besides faith necessary to salvation, and which is attainable only through the Roman Catholic Church. Yet, if sustained, it would unquestionably refute the argument on which we in our essay relied to establish the insufficiency of Protestantism. But the *Episcopal Observer*

does not sustain it; does not even seriously attempt to sustain it. It merely attempts to retort upon us, and show that it is as difficult to elicit an act of faith on Catholic ground as we allege it is on Protestant ground. We tell it, therefore, again, since what it attempts to prove is not the negative of our proposition, even assuming that it has done all it has attempted, which it of course has not, it has not refuted us, or relieved Protestantism in the least of the very grave objections we urged against it.

We are rather surprised that even the editor of the *Episcopal Observer*, who, though by no means a theologian or a disciplined reasoner, is yet a man of at least ordinary natural ability should think of controverting this. He must know that the whole question, as we presented it, turns on the sufficiency or insufficiency of Protestantism to the eliciting of an act of faith, and that, till he has proved its sufficiency, he has proved nothing to his purpose. Protestantism, if good for any thing, must be able to stand on its own merits, and be capable of being sustained, not by the assumed error of some other system, but by its own positive truth. Its advocates show but little confidence in its intrinsic strength, when they refuse to bring forward positive arguments in its defence, and seek to sustain it solely by abusing the church, calumniating her sovereign pontiffs, misstating her history, and misrepresenting her teachings. They themselves admit that faith is a condition *sine qua non* of salvation, and therefore must admit, that, if faith be not elicitable on Protestant ground, no man living and dying a Protestant can be saved. Why, then, do they not see the necessity, before all, of establishing the fact that faith is elicitable on their ground? Why do they so studiously evade the question? The question is for them a question of the gravest magnitude. Their eternal all is at stake. If they are wrong in assuming that they can have faith as Protestants, as we think we have proved they are, they have and can have no well grounded hopes of salvation. How, then, can they treat this question with indifference? Can a reasonable being rest satisfied with his condition, so long as he has room to fear that he is out of the way of salvation? Is the eternal destiny of the soul a matter to be trifled with? "What doth it profit, if a man gain the whole world and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?" St. Matt. xvi. 26. It may be humiliating to the Protestant to descend from that pinnacle of human pride and self-sufficiency on which his as-

sumptions place him, and consent to receive instructions, as a little child, from the church against which he has for so long a time protested,—to prostrate himself at the foot of the cross which he has despised, and to be called by a name he has done his best to make a name of reproach; but it is better even to submit, it is better to own that he has been wrong, that he has deceived and been deceived, that he has sinned before God, blasphemed his holy name, and become unworthy to be called a son in his Father's house, than to eat husks with the swine and to lose his own soul for ever. Let the prodigal son come to himself, and ask if he can have life in the "far country" where he has wasted his substance and is perishing with hunger, and he will not refuse to say, "I will arise and return to my Father's house, where there is bread enough and to spare." Would that our Protestant brethren would once seriously reflect on their own position, once seriously ask themselves, in the solitude of their own self-communings, if they have faith, if they can have faith without returning to the bosom of the church; they would then soon find that where they are they have and can have no foundation on which to build, no ground of hope in God's mercy, or of a share in the heritage of the saints.

In our previous article we charged the *Episcopal Observer* with *ignoring* the position, which we had assumed in the article he was laboring to refute, that what one is required to believe in order to be saved is truth, not falsehood; that is, truth without mixture of error. The editor, in his reply, appears to admit the charge, but labors to justify his neglecting the position, on the ground that it was of no consequence to him. "It was," he says, "of no consequence to us that he (Mr. Brownson) labored long to prove that the 'somewhat' the Christian must believe, in order to be saved, is truth without any mixture of falsehood; for his only object, in getting up his 'exact' theory, was to create a necessity for an 'infallible witness'; and if it turned out in the end that he could not legitimately authenticate the authority of the witness, it would follow of necessity that there is no such thing as faith, or that illicit processes of reasoning had betrayed Mr. Brownson into a false presentation of its claims." —p. 325. *Therefore*, the position and reasoning were of no consequence in the refutation of our argument!

The *Episcopal Observer*, in the first place, labors under a mistake in saying, our "only object in getting up the exact theory was to create a necessity for an infallible witness."

We merely attempted to show, from the nature of faith itself, and of its object, that without an infallible witness there can be no such thing as faith. The necessity, if we were right in our reasoning, was not of our creating, but in the nature of the case. It was the *Episcopal Observer's* business, not to *assume* we created or imagined a necessity where none exists, but to *prove* that the necessity we alleged does not exist in fact. We cannot understand how otherwise he was to refute us.

In the second place, the *Episcopal Observer* distinctly admits, that, if our position and the processes of reasoning we adopted be admitted, it follows of necessity, either that there can be no such thing as faith, or that the infallible witness we contended for, that is, the Roman Catholic Church, must be accepted,—precisely what throughout the whole argument we were laboring to prove. And this is assigned as a reason why, when avowedly attempting to refute us, it was of no consequence to controvert our position, or show the fallacy of our reasoning! You flatter yourself with having "the pleasure" of refuting an opponent. If you grant his position and reasoning, you own you must accept his conclusions; *therefore*, in order to refute him, it is of no consequence to overthrow his position or set aside his reasoning.

This would be a novel way, and, by the by, rather an easy way, of refuting an opponent, and no doubt has many attractions for our friend of the *Episcopal Observer;* yet we would thank him to tell us, *ex professo*, what in an opponent's argument he regards it as necessary to refute in order to refute the argument.

Nevertheless, the editor says he did not entirely overlook the matter; but, all unimportant as it was, had special reference to it in stating one of the points we maintained, which needed looking after, to be, "That, unless the nice *theological* shades of meaning in God's word are appreciated, one cannot be saved."—p. 326. But we complained of him, first, for omitting, when giving professedly a synopsis of our argument, an important position which we had assumed, and without which the argument would be incomplete and without force; and, secondly, for ascribing to us a proposition we neither adopted nor implied, and reasoning against it as if it were ours, and giving his readers no means of discovering it to be not ours. These two just causes of complaint, we are sorry to say, he suffers to remain. He has grossly mutilated and misrepresented our argument, and will neither acknowl-

edge his injustice nor afford his readers the means of detecting it.

Our proposition was, simply, that what one is required to believe in order to be a Christian believer, in order to be saved, is truth, not falsehood, truth without any mixture of falsehood; or, in other terms,—as we elsewhere expressed ourselves,—the word of God in its purity and integrity. The editor tells his readers that we maintain, "that, unless the nice *theological* shades of meaning in God's word are *appreciated*, one cannot be saved." We submit to the candid, nay, even to the uncandid reader, if these two propositions are identical; if, indeed, there is not a wide difference between them. The first proposition the editor omitted, and substituted for it the second. This was grossly unjust. All his reasoning, professedly against our proposition, was directed solely against the one falsely ascribed to us; and he seemed to his readers to be refuting us, when he was really only refuting a proposition which he had himself fabricated, and without any authority asserted to be ours. Here was both falsehood and deception, from the guilt of which the editor hardly attempts to clear himself,—whether through simplicity or malice it is not for us to decide.

But let us examine these two propositions. The one the *Episcopal Observer* ascribes to us evidently makes theology a condition *sine qua non* of salvation. This must be admitted. 1. Because it speaks of the "nice *theological* shades of meaning in God's word." The adjective *theological* is necessarily used here to designate the subject of the shades of meaning, and by its proper force determines that subject to be theology. If this had not been the intention of the framer of the proposition, assuming him to have attached some meaning to the words he adopted, he would have omitted the word theological, and have written simply, "Unless the nice shades of meaning in God's," &c. 2. Because the proposition affirms unless the nice theological shades of meaning be *appreciated*, &c. Now, faith does not appreciate distinctions or shades of meaning. That which appreciates distinctions or shades of meaning in God's word is science, and that particular science which is called *theology*. To appreciate is to comprehend, and nothing is appreciated that is not comprehended. But faith does not comprehend. Its peculiarity is in believing without comprehending, without appreciating, — in believing the incom-

prehensible and the inappreciable. Consequently, to affirm that it is necessary to salvation to appreciate all the nice shades of meaning in God's word is to affirm the necessity of theology to salvation. And there can be no doubt that this is what the editor of the *Episcopal Observer* intended to make his readers believe we did affirm. Whoever looks through his two articles will be perfectly convinced that he means to assert we maintain, that, unless all the nice shades of *theology* are appreciated, unless we have a theology which embraces all the truth there is in God's word, and appreciates all its shades of meaning, and which includes no error in any respect whatever, but is in every conceivable respect the exact truth as it lies in the mind of the Holy Ghost, we cannot be saved. He will not, and dares not, deny that he has represented, and intentionally represented, us as so maintaining.

Now, we deny that our proposition warrants this. What is it we say? That, in order to be saved, one must *believe* truth, not falsehood, truth without any mixture of error, or the word of God in its purity and integrity; and we define faith to be "a theological virtue which consists in believing without doubting, explicitly or *implicitly*, all the truths which Almighty God has revealed, on the veracity of God alone." Is there here one word said about theology? Is there any thing which indicates that we hold it necessary to appreciate the meaning, much more, the nice shades of meaning, there may be in God's word? Yes, one word, says the *Episcopal Observer*, one word which proves, that, if it spoke of theology, we also spoke of it.—327. We define faith to be a *theological* virtue. We therefore use the word theological as well as the editor of the *Observer*, and speak of theology as much as he did. In reply, we add that we have proved conclusively that he did speak of theology, and not only because he used the term *theological*, but because he spoke of shades of meaning to be *appreciated*. The same word, we are sorry to be obliged to inform him, may have more than one meaning, and be used sometimes in one sense, and sometimes in another, to be determined by the connection in which it is used. We defined faith to be a *theological* virtue, to designate its immediate object, which is God, and to distinguish it from the moral virtues. This is a strictly proper use of the word, and has not the remotest reference to the science of theology. The *Episcopal Observer* did not and could not use

the word in this sense, for the reasons already assigned, and because it did not wish to distinguish theological shades of meaning from *moral* shades, and could not have so done if it had wished, since shades of meaning have no *moral* character.

We could not have intended to mean by faith the *science* of theology, for we said faith consists in *believing*, and we were careful through our whole article to draw the distinction between *belief* and science. If we had meant theology, instead of faith, we should have been compelled by the principles we laid down to have written, "Faith is a theological virtue which consists in *comprehending* all the *truths*," &c. But as we used the word *believing*, instead of *comprehending*, it is but reasonable to give us credit for meaning what we said, and to conclude that we meant faith when we said so, and not theological science.

And again; we speak of faith as consisting in believing explicitly or *implicitly*. We did not contend that even an explicit faith in all the truths revealed is necessary to salvation, but admitted that an *implicit* faith might, at least as to some portion of the revealed word, suffice. But in theology, inasmuch as it is a science, all is necessarily explicit, and nothing implicit. It would be absurd to speak of *implicit* science or *implicit* knowledge. But we may speak of implicit faith, since he who believes a proposition believes by implication all it necessarily involves, though he may be far from mentally apprehending it all. He who believes the church to be an infallible teacher believes *implicitly* all she teaches, though as a matter of fact he actually know but a small portion of what she teaches; because her infallibility necessarily implies that all she teaches is true. Consequently, since we spoke of believing explicitly or *implicitly*, our words must be understood of faith, and not of theological science.

The *Episcopal Observer* says that we "define faith as a theological virtue which embraces all the meaning there is in truth, including, of course, its shades of meaning."—p. 327. This is not strictly correct; for we define it as embracing only the truths which Almighty God has *revealed*, and there may, for aught we know, be truths he has not revealed. But admitting that we make faith embrace all the meaning and even the shades of meaning in the word of God, what is this to the *Episcopal Observer's* purpose? To believe explicitly or implicitly all the truths Almighty God

has revealed is something very different from *appreciating* them, from noting and appreciating all their nice shades of meaning. To do this last, one must comprehend these truths, know their full significance, which transcends all mortal ability. They have depths of meaning which will excite the wonder and admiration of the saints through eternity. Even the saints in their beatified state will never be able fully to appreciate the meaning of God's word; for it is infinite, even infinitely infinite. Yet it all may be, and is, embraced explicitly or implicitly in the simple faith of the simplest Christian believer. It is evident, therefore, from all these considerations, that we meant by faith, faith as distinguished from theology, and that we did not contend and could not have contended for such a proposition as the editor has presented to his readers as ours. Will he candidly acknowledge that he has done us injustice, that he has deceived his readers, and claimed to have refuted us, when all he has done is to *ignore* our arguments, and refute a proposition which he himself has invented, and which we should be as ready to reject as he is, and perhaps even more so?

After telling the editor in our former article that we did not expressly or by implication maintain, that, unless all the nice theological shades of meaning in God's word are appreciated, one cannot be saved, and charitably ascribing his misrepresentation to his ignorance of the distinction between faith and theology, we proceeded on the supposition that he probably intended to deny our position, that what one must believe in order to be a Christian believer, in order to be saved, is truth, not falsehood, truth without mixture of error, or the word of God in its purity and integrity, and to maintain as his own thesis the contrary doctrine, namely, in order to be a Christian believer, in order to be saved, it suffices to believe truth *and* falsehood, truth mixed with error, or the mutilated and impure word of God. Assuming this to be his thesis, we proceeded to combat it. In his reply to us he brings it forward again, insists on it, but studiously avoids noticing even one of the very grave objections we urged against it, and does not even attempt to show us, on divine authority, that in matters of Christian faith it is lawful to believe falsehood, nor deign to inform us how much or how little falsehood it is allowable to mix up with the truth. Why is this? Does the editor still remain of the opinion, that the proper way to refute an argu-

ment is to ignore it, or that his word is sufficient authority for believing whatever he may take it into his head to assert?

The editor alleges nothing new in support of the sufficiency of his "mixed" theory. He simply refers to his former argument from the alleged inadequacy of language to serve as the medium of communicating the exact truth. "We showed," he says, "that language being a fallible representative of thought, it must in some instances and to some extent fail to fulfil the end of its use."—p. 326. That the language of the *Episcopal Observer* fails frequently to serve as the medium of communicating the exact truth, or even the truth at all, we have but too ample evidence; but that this is the fault of language itself, rather than of him who uses it, we are not quite so ready to concede. "Mr. Brownson," it says, "would have convinced a larger circle of intelligent readers, if he could have seriously set himself to work, and have shown why, and how, and when, human language was divested of its garments of fallibility, and clothed with the attributes of *unerring* divinity." It will be time enough for us to show this, when we assert, or when we maintain doctrines which imply, the absolute infallibility of language. The *Episcopal Observer* must excuse us, if we do not in all cases show a willingness to undertake to maintain the propositions he fabricates for us. We hold ourselves bound to accept every consequence fairly deducible from principles which we acknowledge; but not every consequence the fertile fancy of the editor, without any authority in any thing we say, chooses to tell his readers is a proposition we are bound to maintain. When he shall have proved from any thing we say or imply, that we hold language is clothed with "the *unerring* attributes of divinity," we will tell him why, how, and when it became clothed with them.

Whether language is adequate to the expression of all the distinctions, all the nice shades of meaning, involved in the revelation Almighty God has made us, we do not inquire; because we have nothing to do, in matters of faith, with distinctions and shades of meaning, and because, when we believe the revelation on competent authority, we necessarily believe all that it involves, whether we recognize or mentally apprehend all the distinctions or shades of meaning it involves, or not. Moreover, though we have heard much of the imperfection of language, we have never yet found it so

very imperfect as some people pretend. The imperfection, for the most part, we have found to be not so much in language as the representative of thought as in the head of him who uses it. As a general rule, he who thinks with clearness, exactness, and precision may always find language a perfect medium of his thought. But be this as it may, the *Episcopal Observer* will not deny that language has some capabilities, that in some instances and to some extent it may serve as a perfect representative of thought. If not, we had better shut our mouths, and stop writing, for there are errors, falsehoods, and deceptions enough already in the world, without adding to the number. The simple question is not, whether language be in all cases absolutely infallible, but whether it is adequate to the exact expression of the word of God, so far forth as that word is the object of faith. When we say two and two are four, language is a perfect representative of our thought, because we assert a simple proposition, with one simple sense, in which there are and can be no distinctions, no nice shades of meaning, to be noted or expressed. So is it with the articles of faith, as propounded for our belief. They are, as formal propositions,—the only sense in which we are required to believe them, since their matter is intrinsically incomprehensible and inappreciable, as all admit,—all simple propositions, each having one simple sense, neither more nor less, which he who believes affirms, and he who disbelieves denies. If language, as it unquestionably is, be adequate to express a simple proposition with clearness, exactness, and precision, it is adequate to the clear, exact, and precise expression of the articles of faith, and therefore the necessity of believing the exact truth, or the word of God, in its purity and integrity, cannot be denied on the ground of the imperfection of language.

We have seen, lately, this argument against the necessity of believing the exact truth, drawn from the assumed imperfection of language, insisted on from several quarters, and it appears to be resorted to as the last refuge of those who are determined not to admit the authority of the Catholic Church. But are they aware of the consequences which necessarily follow from their doctrine? The *Episcopal Observer* expressly teaches that Almighty God himself cannot make us a revelation which shall reach us exempt from error. Then, since Almighty God chooses to make the revelation, chooses the medium through which he makes it,

he must be said to teach the error which *necessarily* accompanies his word, or is *necessarily* mingled with it. But God can teach error in no sense and in no degree whatever, for he is *prima veritas in essendo, in cognoscendo, et in dicendo.* Then, if he cannot make a revelation without necessarily communicating a certain portion of error along with it, be it more or less, he can make us no revelation at all. Hence, the first consequence of the doctrine is *the impossibility of divine revelation.*

If we assume—as we must, if we assume that God does make us a revelation, and cannot make it exempt from error—that he makes a revelation in which he necessarily mingles error with the truth, we deny his veracity, at least his veracity *in speaking,—in dicendo,*—or in making the revelation. Then his veracity cannot be alleged as the sufficient ground for faith. But the veracity of God is the only ground for faith possible, and if it be not sufficient, there is no sufficient ground for faith. Then there is and can be no faith. Hence, the second consequence of the doctrine is *the impossibility of faith.*

But, if God makes us a revelation, and does not make it exempt from error, so far as the error necessarily mingled with the truth extends, he in making the revelation deceives us, leads us necessarily into error. But to charge God with deception, or to accuse him of leading men into error or falsehood, in any degree whatever, is blasphemy; for it makes him a liar. Hence, the third consequence of the doctrine is *blasphemy*, and they who defend it are material, if not formal, blasphemers. We beg the editor to attend to this point, and, if not prepared to accept these consequences, as we presume he is not, to show us—not merely *assert*, but *prove*—that they do not necessarily follow from his doctrine. We beg him to answer fairly, logically, candidly, without evasion, subterfuge, declamation, or abuse.

Furthermore, the Holy Ghost probably knows the capabilities of language as well as our friend of the *Episcopal Observer*, and, since it is repugnant to his veracity to communicate any thing but the exact truth, we may reasonably conclude that, if there are truths, though we can conceive of none, which he knows language is inadequate to express with exactness, he does not reveal them, or make them a part of the word he propounds for our assent. This, it strikes us, would be more reasonable than to conclude with the *Episcopal Observer* that God makes us a revelation mingled with more or less of error.

The editor would be relieved of many of his embarrassments, if he would take the pains to make himself acquainted with a few of the more ordinary terms and distinctions of theological science. A slight acquaintance with a brief course of systematic theology would save him from many of the grave errors, as well as laughable blunders, which his writings everywhere indicate to the theologian. To write confidently, even flippantly, is not always to write wisely or profoundly. We suspect, after all, that our friend of the *Episcopal Observer* really supposes that we assert and maintain, consciously or unconsciously, that no one who entertains the least *theological* error, however trifling or insignificant, and whatever his love and earnest strivings for the truth, can be saved; but we assure him that we had hoped, that, in a community where we have been known for years, and where we are not regarded as an absolute dunce, it could never be necessary for us to deny that we maintain any proposition so obviously and so grossly absurd. We are not among those who claim infallibility for the human understanding, nor has our own past experience tended to give us any very lofty notions of its ability, when left to itself, to avoid even great and dangerous errors. Unquestionably, we assert that faith must be infallible, that in matters of faith we must believe the word of God, the whole word of God, and nothing but the word of God; but to our mind there is a wide difference between asserting this and asserting that every or any purely theological error excludes from salvation. Whoever would be saved must believe the true doctrine of the Trinity; but it does not follow from this that he cannot be saved, if he honestly err in the account he renders of the doctrine to philosophy, in the applications he may make of it in the general explanations of science, in the conclusions he may draw from it, or the arguments by which he may attempt to render it less difficult for reason to grasp, —providing that he advance nothing which impugns the doctrine itself as a simple article of faith. The same may be said in regard to all the articles of faith. No error excludes from salvation, unless it be an error in matters strictly of faith. In matters strictly of faith, we of course contend that it is necessary to believe the exact truth; because, *if error be mingled with the word, we cannot believe it at all.* If we believe the word at all, we believe it because it is God's word, on the divine veracity alone. We have and can have no other ground of belief; and if we do not believe it on

this ground alone, our belief is not faith. But we have not, and cannot have, the divine veracity for error; because God does not reveal error, and cannot speak what is not strictly true. If, then, we receive the word only as mingled with error, we do not receive it on the divine veracity; but on some other authority, and therefore on an authority insufficient for faith.

The editor, strange as it may seem, actually appears to be unaware of the fact that *falsehood is not susceptible of the degree of evidence requisite for faith;* and he evidently reasons as if men might have faith in falsehood as well as in truth. But faith in error or falsehood is impossible. If we mingle error with the word, it must be because the evidence on which we receive the word is indistinguishable from that on which we receive the error we mingle with it. The evidence for the truth is then no higher than the evidence we have for the error. Then the truth is no better evidenced to us than it is possible to evidence falsehood. *But when the truth is no better evidenced than it is possible to evidence falsehood, it is not sufficiently evidenced for faith.* Consequently, when we mingle error with the word, we have no faith in the word itself. We must, then, believe the exact truth, or not have faith.

We told the *Episcopal Observer* that it must be aware that on the definition which we gave of faith rests nearly the whole of our argument for the necessity of an infallible witness; for, if faith consist in believing without doubting, it is obvious that it is impossible to elicit an act of faith on the authority of a fallible witness. To this the *Episcopal Observer* replies:—"Is God speaking audibly by his word to the ear, or silently by his spirit in the heart, a fallible witness? Did we not say in our former article that we have in the person of the Holy Ghost what answers Mr. Brownson's theory, a witness and interpreter that cannot err, therefore infallible?"—p. 327.

1. It is fair to infer from this that the editor means to concede our definition of faith, and that faith is not elicitable without an infallible witness,—two points of some importance in the controversy. He must now prove that he has or can have an infallible witness without the Roman Catholic Church, or admit that without the Roman Catholic Church faith is not elicitable.

2. The witness he alleges is in one sense the very witness we contend for, since we hold the church to be the wit-

ness to the fact of revelation only on the ground that it is the Holy Ghost that witnesses in her testimony. If by the Holy Ghost in person the *Episcopal Observer* means the Holy Ghost bearing witness through the church as his organ, we are agreed, and there is no controversy between us; but if, as is the case, it means the Holy Ghost bearing witness immediately to the individual, we deny the assumption, and put the editor upon his proofs.

3. We cannot entertain the *Episcopal Observer's* appeal to the personal testimony suggested, for its pages bear unequivocal evidence that its editor does not write under the immediate dictation of the Holy Ghost. The editor is a bold man, but we do not believe that even he dare lay his hand on his heart and solemnly assert that he truly and sincerely believes that he is specially inspired by the Holy Ghost to say what is or is not the word of God.

4. The *Episcopal Observer* cannot claim, on its own principles, to have an infallible witness, even in case it has the private testimony of the Holy Ghost. The Holy Ghost can be an infallible witness only on condition that he speak to the mind and heart the *exact* truth; which the editor contends, owing to the fallibility of language, is not possible.

5. Though the *Episcopal Observer* may have *said* in its former article that it has the infallible testimony of the Holy Ghost to the fact of revelation, we do not recollect that it *proved* that it has or even may have it; and since it denies to Almighty God the ability to tell the exact truth. it must excuse us if we cannot take its unsupported assertions as conclusive for whatever it may allege. We cannot consent to award it an infallibility which it denies to Almighty God.

6. The editor has no right to allege the private testimony of the Holy Ghost as the basis of an argument he is publicly urging; for, according to his own admission, it is a secret of his own bosom, not recognizable by or provable to another. The validity of an argument that rests upon it cannot, therefore, be publicly established; and we trust it cannot be necessary to prove that an argument, the validity of which cannot be publicly established, is an argument which it is not lawful publicly to urge.

The resort to the private testimony of the Holy Ghost, or what we called *private illumination*, is always exceedingly suspicious,—may, in fact, be always regarded as a mere evasion of a difficulty felt to be unanswerable. It is always a

virtual acknowledgment of defeat. The man finds himself condemned by reason, and appeals to unreason,—flattering himself that he will henceforth be secure, because, if he cannot prove that he has the private illumination alleged, you may find it equally difficult to prove that he has it not.

But this miserable subterfuge shall not avail the editor. He promised himself the "pleasure" of refuting us, and we hold him to his promise. We deny in our argument that faith can be elicited without the Roman Catholic Church. He says it can be, and alleges private inspiration, what he calls the "internal monitor," as the means by which it is elicitable. His thesis, then, is, Faith is elicitable by the internal monitor, or private testimony of the Holy Ghost, without the Roman Catholic Church. This thesis he must maintain by positive proofs, or yield to his opponent. But he cannot maintain this thesis without proving, 1. That faith is morally as well as metaphysically possible by this private testimony; and 2. That it is possible in the ordinary course of God's gracious providence.

1. We did not deny that faith is elicitable without the Roman Catholic Church because it could not have been made elicitable in some other way; but because it has not been. We say expressly, "We do not deny the possibility, on the part of God, of adopting some other method."—p. 367. The question, then, is not a question of *a priori* reasoning; but a simple question of fact. Before the editor can refute our thesis or maintain his own, he must prove, as a matter of fact, that faith is actually made elicitable without the Roman Catholic Church, and by the private testimony of the Holy Ghost. It is not elicitable by this private testimony, unless we have it. He must, then, in order to prove faith possible by it, prove that we have it, or at least may have it, if we will.

2. The editor must not only prove that we have or may have the private testimony, but that we have or may have it as standing in the ordinary course of God's gracious providence. For, if it does not stand in the ordinary course of God's gracious providence, it is a miracle. But we were not discussing what is or is not possible by means of miracles, but what is or is not possible without miracles,—as is evident from the fact, that we were not seeking what is possible on the part of God, but what he has made possible on the part of man. The church is, indeed, a miracle in relation to the order of nature, inasmuch as it is super-

natural; but standing in the ordinary course of God's gracious providence, we do not call it a miracle, any more than we call that a miracle which stands in the order of God's natural providence, or providence as manifested in the order of nature. If the private testimony stands in the order of grace, as the ordinary method of eliciting faith, it is not to be regarded as a miracle; but if it do not stand in the order of grace as the ordinary method of eliciting faith, it is a miracle. Hence, the editor must prove that private illumination is the method Almighty God in the ordinary course of his gracious providence has actually adopted for eliciting faith, or fail to refute our thesis or to sustain his own.

That private illumination is the method actually adopted as the ordinary method of eliciting faith, we deny, 1. Because the faith we are required to have cannot be elicited by it; 2. Because the method actually adopted is a different method; and 3. Because faith must be elicited by this different method, or not be the faith on which the question turns.

I. The faith which would be elicitable by means of the private testimony of the Holy Ghost, even assuming that we have or may have it, would be simply faith in a new revelation made specially to the individual. This private testimony must be sufficient, in order to meet the demand, to enable us to say, in all cases, what is and what is not the word of God. But the word must be propounded to the mind, before testimony to the fact that it is God's word can be received. It must be propounded by the Spirit privately illuminating, or by some other authority. If by some other authority, then the sufficiency of private illumination for eliciting faith is denied, and the question comes up as to what this other authority is, and as to what may be its competency. If by the Spirit privately illuminating, then the private illumination propounds as well as evidences the word; which is the same thing as its revelation. Then whatever the word believed on the authority of the private illumination, it is a new revelation, and, as a formal revelation, independent of every other revelation, and has no connection with any other revelation, either express or implied.

But a new revelation made specially to the individual is not the revelation faith in which we have assumed, on the strength of Protestant admissions, to be essential to salvation, and which we have denied to be elicitable without the Roman Catholic Church; for we say expressly, in our article

on *The Church against No-Church*,—"But the revelation to which we are seeking a witness is not a new revelation, not a private revelation which Almighty God may see proper to make to individuals, but a revelation already made and propounded for the belief of all men." — p. 367. Throughout our whole argument we presuppose that a revelation has been made, a historical revelation, a public or catholic revelation, which we call briefly "the Christian revelation," and which must be believed, as the condition *sine qua non* of salvation. It is always on the means and conditions of eliciting faith in this, to us, historical revelation that the question turns. Faith in any other revelation, then, although it should embrace materially the same truths as this, would not be the faith in question. Even were it proved that faith in some other revelation is elicitable without the Roman Catholic Church, it would be nothing to the purpose, for it might still be true that faith in this is not possible without it. The faith involved in the controversy is a faith in this formal revelation, already made and completed. But private illumination can give us faith only in a new revelation, a private revelation, made specially to the individual. Therefore, the faith we are required to have, the faith on which the whole question turns, is not elicitable by private illumination, even in case private illumination be assumed as a fact.

II. But the method of private illumination is not the method of eliciting faith actually adopted; because it is evident from the Holy Scriptures that another method has been adopted. The Holy Scriptures are admissible testimony in the case; for, in the first place, we adduce them only as simple *historical documents*, and, in the second place, they are held by Protestants, against whom we are reasoning, to be of divine authority. According to these, the method of eliciting faith actually adopted is not by private inspiration, but through the ministry of teachers to whom Jesus Christ committed his revelation, and whom he authorized to teach or propound it. St. Matt. xxviii. 19, 20.

1. The revelation to be believed must be propounded, and with authority. This is evident from the express assertion of St. Paul in his Epistle to the Romans. "How can they believe him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher? And how can they preach, unless they be sent?"—x. 14, 15. The ob-

vious sense of this is that faith comes by hearing (verse 17), —the word must be propounded; that hearing comes by the preacher,— there must be some one to propound the word; and that the preacher preaches because sent, — he who propounds the word must propound it with authority, or because authorized to propound it; — for this, in this connection, is unquestionably the meaning of the word *sent.* Therefore, faith is elicitable only on condition that the word is propounded, and propounded with authority, and therefore only on condition that there be pastors and teachers authorized to propound it.

But, on the assumption of private illumination as the authority for saying what is or is not the word of God, the word cannot be authoritatively propounded. To propound is to propound to others, and to propound authoritatively to others is to propound with an authority which is equally an authority for him who propounds and for them to whom he propounds, — an authority which he may adduce, and which they must admit. But private illumination is not such authority. It is not an authority common to both parties; — is not public or catholic; but private, confined to the bosom of the individual. In the preacher, it is no authority for the hearers; in the hearers, it is no authority for the preacher. Confined to himself, he cannot adduce it as the reason why they should believe him; confined to them, he cannot appeal to it, for he cannot know that they have it, and has no right to presume on their having it. Moreover, to assume it in them as the authority would be to transfer the authority from him to them; and then, if they might be said to *hear* with authority, he could not be said to *propound* with authority. Besides, this would place the one assumed to be the learner above the teacher, and subject him who is assumed to teach to them who, it is assumed, need to be taught, — an absurdity which can find place only in Congregationalism. It would compel the teacher to rely on those he teaches for the authority with which to teach, and to preach not because *sent*, but because *called;* which would be as if the Son of God came not because sent by the Father, but because called by the sinners for whom he died.

On this ground, it is evident the preacher could not propound the word with authority. But it must be propounded with authority, or faith is not elicitable, as before proved. Therefore, either faith is not elicitable, or there is some-

other method than that of private illumination by which it is elicitable.

2. Another method than that of private illumination is evidently the method of eliciting faith actually adopted; because, on the method actually adopted, it is possible for the preacher to vindicate the word and convince gainsayers. "A bishop must," the holy apostle tells us, "embracing that faithful word which is according to doctrine, ... be able to exhort in sound doctrine and convince the gainsayers. For there are many disobedient, vain talkers, seducers, especially they of the circumcision, who must be reproved, who subvert whole houses, teaching things which they ought not for filthy lucre's sake ..... Wherefore rebuke them sharply, that they may be sound in the faith." — Tit. i. 7–13. But this is impossible, if he have no authority on which to declare what is or is not sound doctrine, but the private illumination of the Holy Ghost. He can convict gainsayers, vain talkers, seducers, only on condition that he has a public or catholic authority for the word, to which they can be compelled to answer, and by which he can vindicate the truth, and refute the error. But private illumination is not a public or catholic authority. It is authority only for the individual who has it. Since, then, the preacher of the word is required to do that which he cannot do without a different authority, it is evident that some other method than private illumination for saying what is or is not the word of God, and therefore for eliciting faith, is the method actually adopted.

There is here a question of no small magnitude, and of the greatest practical importance. The whole land is evidently overrun with infidels and misbelievers. The editor is as ready to admit this as we are. He finds men, as well as we, denying or perverting the faith. He is at war on all hands with what he regards as error. He is at war with his Puseyite brethren, who he thinks are making shipwreck of the faith; he is virtually, whether he knows it or not, at war with the episcopal constitution of his own church, and contending, substantially, for the Congregationalism in which he was brought up, and which he has never really renounced; nay, he enters the lists against us, and labors with might and main, though without any flattering success, to convict us of error, — to prove the Catholic Church corrupt, as good as no church at all, and that on her authority faith is not possible. But does he not see that all this is

pitiably absurd, if he have no authority but private illumination for saying what is or is not the word of God? If we demand of him evidence that he, instead of those he opposes, has the word, what answer has he to return? He cannot appeal to private illumination, for that is a secret of his own bosom, as he himself admits, and therefore is no authority by which to prove that he is right or others wrong. He must either admit another authority, a catholic or public authority, or close his pages, and shut his mouth. His very attempt to convict us and others of error is a proof that he himself, unless he is capable of grosser inconsistency than even we can believe him, does not rely on private illumination alone, but really believes that he has an authority for faith which is common to him and us.

3. The method of eliciting faith, or the rule of faith, actually adopted, cannot be private illumination, because the method or rule actually adopted presupposes the possibility of *heresy*. "The man that is a heretic, after the first and second admonition, avoid." — Tit. iii. 15. There must be, according to what we have just said, a public or catholic authority for faith, or no one can have the right or the ability to admonish another for heresy; for he must be convicted of heresy before he can be admonished, and he cannot be convicted of heresy on a private authority. Where there is only a private authority for faith, there can be only a private faith. But where there is only a private faith, and no authority to propound a catholic or public faith, there is and can be no heresy; for heresy is not the wilful rejection of the private faith of individuals, but of a public or catholic faith. But there can be heresy. Therefore, there must be a public or catholic faith. Therefore, a public or catholic authority for faith. But private illumination is not such authority. Therefore, there is and must be another authority than that of private illumination.

III. These considerations suffice to establish the fact, that there is another method than that of private illumination actually adopted. We proceed now to prove the third proposition, namely, that faith must be elicited by this other method, or not be the faith on which the question turns.

1. It can be elicited only by this other method. This is evident from the words of the holy apostle already quoted. Rom. x. 14, 15. Faith comes by hearing, hearing by the preacher, and the preacher preaches because sent. But the

text goes further, and asserts not only that faith does come by hearing, but that it can come in no other way; not only that hearing does come by the preacher, but that it cannot come without him; not only that the preacher does preach because sent, but that he cannot preach unless sent. The preacher evidently cannot be sent, without an authority competent to send him. No authority, not public or catholic, is competent to send him; for the mission, as we have seen, is public or catholic. Therefore, without a public or catholic authority, faith is impossible. Therefore, faith must be elicited by means of a public or catholic authority, or not be the faith in question. Hence St. Augustine says, *Evangelio non crederem, nisi me ecclesiæ Catholicæ commoveret auctoritas.*

2. This is of itself conclusive; but we add, secondly, that faith must be elicited by this other authority, as is evident from the nature of faith as a theological virtue. According to the definition of faith already given and accepted, at least accepted so far as we have occasion now to insist on it, "faith is a *theological virtue* which consists in believing without doubting, explicitly or implicitly, all the truths God has revealed, *on the veracity of God alone.*" Theological virtues are those whose immediate object is God, and God as transcending the order of nature, and apprehensible only through supernatural revelation; for those virtues which refer to God as their object only mediately, as revealed in the order of nature, and as he is known or may be known by the natural light of reason, are not termed theological virtues, but are simply intellectual and moral. Faith, then, as a theological virtue, is a virtue whose immediate object is God; that is, what in faith we immediately believe is God himself. The matters beside God included in faith are not that which is immediately believed; we believe them only mediately, by God, on his authority,—because we believe him. Thus, charity is a theological virtue, whose immediate object is God; for though it include the love of God *and* of our neighbour, yet the immediate object of our love is God; because we are to love our neighbour not for his own sake, but in and for the sake of God. Thus in hope, as a theological virtue, what we immediately hope is God; and the other things we hope for, such as pardon of our sins, assistance of divine grace, and final perseverance, are hoped only mediately, as pertaining to God, and for the sake of God. In like manner, in faith God is what we im-

mediately believe, and the other truths revealed we believe by him, on his authority.

But faith pertains to the intellect as its subject, and the intellect stands related to its object in the order of truth. Hence the immediate object of faith is God as truth, or as essentially true; as the immediate object of charity is God as goodness, or essentially good. God, as truth or as essentially true, is the infinite veracity in being, or, as the theologians say, *prima veritas in essendo.* The immediate object of faith, then, in the last analysis, is God as essentially true, or, in other words, the infinite veracity of God. We must, then, in faith believe *on* the veracity of God; for if not, we do not believe the veracity of God itself; and if we do not believe this, our faith, though it may be *intellectual*, is not *theological.*

Hence, were it possible to believe the matters revealed in the word of God on any other authority than the veracity of God revealing them,—say, as our Unitarian friends contend, because they appear reasonable to us, satisfy the wants of the intellect and heart, warm our sensibilities, exalt our imagination, and give us lofty and ennobling views of the worth, capacities, and destiny of the human soul,—our belief would not be theological faith, for it would not necessarily imply belief in the veracity of God. We should not, in such case, necessarily believe God, either as the ultimate truth in being, in knowing, or in speaking, and therefore God would in no sense be the immediate object believed. At best, we should believe God only mediately; as if in charity we loved our neighbour immediately, for his own sake, we could love God only mediately, that is, for the sake of our neighbour. We must, then, believe solely on the veracity of God; for it is only by believing *on* the veracity of God, that, in believing, we believe it; and it is only by believing it, that in believing we believe God as the immediate object of our belief; and it is only by believing him as the immediate object of our belief, that our faith is *theological.*

But we cannot believe on the veracity of God, unless the authority that propounds the word be his authority; for it is only on this condition that his veracity can be presented to the mind as the immediate object to be believed. Hence, theological faith is not elicitable, unless God himself propounds the word, and is not elicited unless elicited *because* it is his authority that propounds.

But faith is not only *theological;* it is a theological *virtue.* As a virtue, it implies an act of the will in obedience to a command. Faith depends on two faculties of the soul, the will and the understanding. It cannot be elicited, unless the will command the intellect to assent to the truth revealed; because the matter of faith is obscure, intrinsically inevident, and does not of itself *compel* the intellectual assent.

But this act of the will, in order to be a *virtue*, must be not only a command to the intellect to believe, but also itself an act of obedience to the command of God; and in order to be a *theological* virtue, it must be an act of obedience to the *supernatural* command of God. Consequently, to the integrity of faith it is essential that it be elicited not only by the veracity of God as the ground of assent, but also *in obedience to the authority of God commanding us to believe.* We must believe the word not simply for the sake of believing the truth, but also for the sake of obeying God.

But we cannot obey God, when and where his authority is not present to command; and we do not elicit faith, when we do not believe in obedience to his authority; for to believe on any other authority would not be to believe because God commands us to believe. Then faith is not elicitable, unless God himself propound the word by his own authority; and is not elicited, in fact, unless elicited *in obedience* to his authority. Therefore, faith must be elicited on, and in obedience to, the authority of God propounding the word, or it is not faith.

But faith is a *theological* virtue, and therefore can be elicited only in obedience to the *supernatural* authority of God. Therefore, God must propound the word in a supernatural manner. But the faith to be elicited is not a private faith, but a public or catholic faith, as we have already proved. The authority of God which propounds it must, then, be not only supernatural, but also public or catholic. Faith, as a theological virtue, may be elicited by means of private revelation, and no doubt often was so elicited under the old dispensation, and, for aught we know is so elicited by individuals under the new. But this, though *theological*, is not at the same time theological and *catholic*, and, moreover, it is miraculous, not in the ordinary course of God's gracious providence, and therefore is not the faith with which we are concerned. But God cannot propound his word with authority in a public or catholic manner, unless he express his authority in a public or catholic manner.

Then he must express his authority through some publicly recognizable organ. The authority is not the authority of God as revealed in the natural order, and cognoscible by the natural light of reason; but supernatural, and therefore can itself be known only as supernaturally revealed. If not revealed, or in some way made intellectually apprehensible as the authority of God, it cannot be obeyed as such. It can be revealed or made intellectually apprehensible only in two ways, visibly or invisibly. If invisibly, it is not expressed in a public or catholic manner. Then it must be visibly. If visibly, then through the inspiration of private individuals, publicly accredited by miracles and appropriate seals of the divine commission, as under the old law, or by a body of pastors and teachers, that is, the church, or *Ecclesia docens*, as Catholics hold to be the fact under the new law, or Christian dispensation. For the first mode of visibly expressing the authority of God the *Episcopal Observer* and its friends will not contend; they must then admit the second, or deny the elicitability of the faith in question. Therefore, if faith be elicitable at all, it must be elicited in obedience to the authority of God propounding it through a body of pastors and teachers, or, briefly, in obedience to the authority of God expressed through the visible church teaching. The visible church teaching is the Roman Catholic Church, as proved in our former article. Therefore, faith is not elicitable without the Roman Catholic Church. Therefore, faith cannot be elicited by private illumination, but must be elicited in obedience to the Roman Catholic Church teaching, or not be the faith required.

But this conclusion does not rest solely on *a priori* reasoning. We establish it as a fact by the testimony of the Holy Scriptures.

1. In our article on *The Church against No-Church*, we proved that our blessed Saviour did institute the church teaching, and commanded it to teach all nations even unto the consummation of the world. St. Matt. xxviii. 19, 20. But if he commands her to teach all nations, he commands all nations to believe what she teaches; for the authority to teach necessarily implies the corresponding duty to believe. Then we must believe what the church teaches, or we do not believe what God commands us to believe; and *because* she teaches, or else in believing we do not obey God, since her authority is his. Also we must believe what she teaches because she teaches it; for, as a matter of fact, this is one

of the things which she teaches, and therefore not to believe because she teaches would be to disobey the command of God to believe what she teaches. Therefore, we must believe the word as propounded and *because* propounded by the church, or body of teachers Almighty God has commissioned as the visible organ of his authority, or not have faith.

2. Our blessed Lord says to those he authorizes to teach, "He that heareth you heareth me; and he that despiseth you despiseth me; and he that despiseth me despiseth him that sent me."—St. Luke, x. 16. This proves that the authority of the teachers is the authority of God, or, in other words, that God does express his authority through a visible organ; for, otherwise, to hear the teachers would not be to hear him. Then, 1. to believe in obedience to the teachers is to believe in obedience to God,—"he that heareth you heareth me." Then, 2. not to believe in obedience to them is not to believe in obedience to God,—"he that despiseth you despiseth me; and he that despiseth me despiseth him that sent me." Therefore, we must believe in obedience to the teachers Almighty God has commissioned, or not believe because God commands us to believe; and if we do not believe because he commands us to believe, we have not faith, that is, the public or catholic faith on which the question turns. We might easily multiply our proofs from the Holy Scriptures, but these are conclusive.

We have now proved that the method of eliciting faith in the word, actually adopted, is another than private illumination, that it is by a body of teachers, or the church teaching; and that faith must be elicited by means of, and in obedience to, the church teaching, or not be faith. Therefore, private illumination is not and could not have been the method adopted. Appeal may be made to it, but it will not avail; for such is the nature of the faith which we are commanded to have, that it cannot be elicited unless in obedience to a public or catholic authority propounding the word. We said all this in substance in our article on *The Church against No-Church;* for we say,—

"But the revelation to which we are seeking a witness is not a new revelation, not a private revelation which Almighty God may see proper to make to individuals, but a revelation already made and propounded for the belief of all men. This is the revelation to be established; and since your private revelation does not establish this, or if so, only by superseding it and rendering it of no value (for it can prove it even to the

individual only by its being seen to be identical with what the individual receives without it), it evidently cannot be the witness we are in pursuit of. And this is the common answer to the alleged private illumination, whatever its form. It is valid only within the bosom of the individual, and can be alleged in support of no common or public faith; therefore can be no witness in any disputed case. It may be a private benefit, or it may not be. It is a matter not to be spoken of, and a fact never to be used, when the question concerns any thing but the individual himself. *But the faith we are required to have is a faith propounded to all men, a public faith, which must be sustained by public evidence.*"

The *Episcopal Observer* should have denied in the outset our assumption, that the faith we are required to have is a public or catholic faith; or, if not prepared to do this, which, of course, it was not, it should have shown that a private witness may be competent authority for a public or catholic faith. For, till the editor had shown this, and relieved the private witness of the charge we brought against it, private illumination stood convicted of incompetency, and he had no right to introduce it.

But, though what we have said is conclusive against the theory of private inspiration, a theory which a professed churchman should both fear and be ashamed to urge,—there is still one other consideration, of a more practical character, to which we beg leave to call the attention of the *Episcopal Observer*. We called its attention to it in our former reply; but, as it has the happy faculty of overlooking the points in an opponent's argument which are somewhat difficult to refute, we must take the liberty of calling its attention to it again. The editor must be aware that he is not the only one who appeals to private inspiration. Almost every sectary, from Montanus down to the Mormon impostor, not overlooking Luther, Zwingli, Calvin, the Anabaptists, Quakers, Puritans, and Methodists, makes precisely the same appeal. Now, it is certain that some of the sectaries who make this appeal are mistaken, for some of them teach and have taught doctrines contradictory to those taught by others, and doctrines rash, scandalous, and pernicious,—at war with common decency, social order, and domestic peace and virtue. It is necessary, then, to observe the admonition of the holy apostle:—"Dearly beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits, whether they be of God; because many false prophets are gone out into the world."—1 St. John, iv. 1.

But we cannot try the spirits, unless we have some criterion by which to try them. This criterion cannot be the private

inspiration, the "internal monitor," as the *Episcopal Observer* calls it; because that is what is be tried, and it would be absurd to talk of trying a spirit by itself. The criterion must be independent of the inward witness, and distinct from it,—a standard or measure by which it may itself be tested or measured. What, then, is this criterion by which we may try the spirits, and know whether they are of God, or whether they are spirits of error? The answer is at hand. "We are of God. He that knoweth God *heareth us;* and he that is not of God heareth not us. By this we know the spirit of truth and the spirit of error."—1 St. John, iv. 6. The test of the spirit is in the fact that it does or does not *hear* the apostles. If it hear them, it is of God; if it hear not them, it is a spirit of error. The editor then, must prove that he hears the apostles, before he can have the right to assume that his internal monitor is of God; and if he does not hear them, we have the right to tell him that it is *not* of God, but an error, a delusion.

But how will our friend of the *Episcopal Observer* prove that he hears the apostles? Will he answer, as we have often been answered by persons who take his ground, that he hears the apostles because he holds the apostolic faith? To hold the apostolic faith is the same thing as to hear the apostles. This, then, would be to prove *idem per idem*, which is not allowable. Will he allege that he hears the apostles, because he holds the faith as contained in the Holy Scriptures? This would be to attempt again to prove *idem per idem;* for, on the assumption, which he must make, that the Scriptures contain the whole revealed word, the faith as contained in them is the same thing as the apostolic faith, and to hold it is the same thing as to hear the apostles. But how will he prove that he holds the faith as contained in the Holy Scriptures? By the internal monitor? This is what he says, but this would be to reason in a *vicious* circle; for it would assume the monitor to prove the faith and the faith to prove the monitor. How, then, will he prove that he hears the apostles?

This is conclusive. The editor makes, in his reply to us, the internal monitor the witness to the fact of revelation; that is, he proves his doctrine by his private inspiration,—"God speaking audibly by his word to the ear, or silently by his spirit in the heart." But the holy apostle tells him that he must prove his inspiration by his doctrine, for, if he have not the true doctrine, that is, if he hears not the apos-

tles, his inspiration is not of God, but is the spirit of error. He and the beloved apostle of our blessed Lord are diametrically opposed, and, if we are to take the apostle's authority in preference to his, it must be conceded that the doctrine is not and cannot be proved by the internal monitor.

Let not the editor reply to us again, that it is not necessary to prove the witness, that is, the internal monitor. He must prove it, not for others only, but for himself; for, according to the blessed apostle, he must hear the apostles, or his internal monitor is of no authority, but is a delusion, the spirit of error. Till he proves it to be of God from the fact that he hears the apostles, he is bound to regard it as a false witness, or at least a witness not competent to testify. He must, then, prove his inspiration, establish the fact that his witness is of God. How, we ask again, will he do it?

Will he shift his ground, and say that he is in the communion of the apostolic church, and hears the apostles because he hears their legitimate successors, who continue their authority and doctrine? This would be a good answer in our mouth, but not in his; for it abandons private inspiration as the witness to the fact of revelation, and assumes with us the Catholic Church. If he takes this ground, he makes communion the test of doctrine, and doctrine the test of the internal monitor, and by so doing condemns himself and the whole Protestant world; he yields the whole principle in debate, and leaves to be settled between us only the simple question of fact,—whether his church or ours be the Apostolic Church; and that his is the Apostolic Church we deny, and he must be a bold man to assert; for, even assuming its identity with the Anglican, which may be questioned, it is obviously schismatic and heretical, and withal only about three hundred years old, as he is well aware, and as we have proved unanswerably, in our essay in reply to the *New York Churchman*, entitled, *The Anglican Church Schismatic**; as also in the essay on *The Church against No-Church.* The editor is therefore precluded by his own position, by the position of his church, and the very doctrine of private illumination for which he contends, from assuming Catholic ground; and yet it is only by assuming Catholic ground that he can prove his right to follow his internal monitor. Here is the difficulty in which he is placed. He assumes that the inward monitor is its own

*Vol. IV., p. 567.

witness and authority, and therefore may be taken as the witness to the fact of revelation, the authority for saying what is or is not the revelation or word of God. The spirit, he assumes, witnesseth itself, and has no need to be tested by a criterion or standard distinct from itself. Here is his fundamental error, and that of all who contend for either private reason or private inspiration as the witness to the fact of revelation. But, according to the blessed apostle, they must prove the spirit by the doctrine, and not the doctrine by the spirit. Hence, no private spirit is of any authority, even to the individual who professes to have it, unless it heareth the apostles; and, as we have seen, the proof that it heareth the apostles is that it gathereth to the apostolic communion. Hence, we are to take for our principle, The church proves the doctrine, the doctrine the private spirit; not the private spirit proves the doctrine, and the doctrine the church or communion.

But it is due to the *Episcopal Observer* to say that it has attempted to answer, in part, one or two of the objections we urged against its private witness. We objected, If private illumination be the witness to the fact of revelation, those not privately illuminated have not the evidence necessary to warrant faith in the revelation. But no blame can attach to a man for not believing what is not sufficiently evidenced to warrant belief. Therefore, those not privately illuminated are not to blame for not believing the revelation Almighty God has made. But whoever does not believe is to blame, for unbelief is admitted to be not merely an effect of sin, but a sin itself. Therefore, there must be, independent of private illumination, sufficient motives of credibility to warrant belief. To the argument the editor does not reply; he merely alleges, that, if any are not privately illuminated, "the fault is their own. All may have the promptings of the Spirit, if they will. The grace of God which bringeth salvation hath appeared to *all* men teaching," &c.—p. 327. As to the soundness of our own argument, we will here raise no question; it will suffice to show that the editor has not refuted it. The position, that it is their own fault if not privately illuminated, is not proved. The illumination is a free gift, not dependent on our will, nor meritable by us. It is not due us in the order of nature, as something which God in our nature promises us. It must, then, be proved that Almighty God has promised it in the order of grace to all who comply with the condi-

tions of its reception which he has instituted; or we can have no more right to say that it is our own fault if we have it not, than we should have to say it was the fault of the primitive believers that they were not all inspired as apostles and evangelists. But this the editor does not prove.

The fact alleged, that all may have "the promptings of the Spirit, if they will," if admitted, does not prove the assertion; for there is a wide disparity between "the promptings of the Spirit" and the private illumination, which is a re-revelation of the whole word of God, and by which one is able to say, infallibly, what is or is not the word of God originally revealed. To prompt is not to illumine, but simply to incite or move to action. But, in point of fact, the promptings of the Spirit are not contingent on our will; for they must precede the motion of the will as its necessary conditions. The Spirit does not prompt us because we will that it should prompt us, nor because we will what is pleasing to God; but it prompts and assists us, that we may will what is pleasing to God. To deny this would be to fall into the Pelagian heresy.

The text quoted from St. Paul, Tit. ii. 11, 12, if it proves any thing to the purpose, proves too much. If the editor understands by the word *grace* the private illumination in question,—which, by the way, is not its meaning,—and relies on the fact that it is asserted to have appeared unto *all* men, it proves that all are specially and infallibly inspired, which obviously is not the fact, as he himself admits; for, it it were, no man could err as to what is and what is not the word to be believed. But, assuming that he so intends to understand the text, we demand his authority for saying that the *grace* spoken of is the private illumination in question. Will he allege the fact, that the grace is said to be *teaching*, &c.? This will not avail; because he must prove what it teaches is the word of God we are commanded to believe. But this the text itself does not assert. The text simply asserts that "the grace of God our Saviour hath appeared to all men, instructing us, that, renouncing impiety and worldly desires, we should live soberly, piously, and justly in this present world,"—that is, certain practical duties which presuppose a knowledge of the faith, as already possessed. But waive this. The grace teaches—how? Through the body of pastors and teachers? Then the text makes for us. By private illumination? Where are the proofs?

We objected, again, to the private witness, that, if this were the witness, the fact whether any one embraces the faith or not could never be known out of the bosom of the individual. The *Episcopal Observer* replies, that it is not necessary that it should be. If there is to be a public faith, it is necessary, for reasons already assigned; and, if we may believe the blessed apostle, according to the order actually adopted, it is necessary to be known, even if there is to be only a private faith; because private faith must find its authority in the public faith.

The *Episcopal Observer* asks, p. 327, "How can it be known whether this or that individual will finally be saved?" Whether this or that individual will finally be saved is not necessary to be known; because the fact whether he will or not is not a fact all men are required to believe, as an article of faith. The sneer, that "the Romish Church may devise arbitrary rules by which it may pretend to know who are sound in the faith and who are not, who are going to heaven and who to hell" may do for a writer who feels himself as little bound, in an argument, to tell the truth as to observe the rules of logic; but its force is all in its malice. The Catholic Church claims to be able to say what is sound faith, but not who actually is sound in the faith, any further than the internal faith is manifested by the external profession and conduct. She claims to be able to say what one must do in order to be saved; but not whether this or that individual will or will not be saved. The doctrine the editor would charge upon the church belongs to his own Evangelical school. We do not, as Catholics, know whether we deserve love or hatred. We know if we keep the commandments we shall enter into life, and that we can keep them if we will; but whether we do keep them in the sense demanded, or whether we shall persevere unto the end in keeping them, we know not, and cannot know unless by a special revelation. We hope, but take heed lest we fall.

But, if we object to the *Episcopal Observer's* doctrine of private illumination, we by no means pretend that divine grace even to enlighten the understanding is not essential to the elicitation of faith. Faith is a theological virtue, and no theological virtue is possible by mere natural force. Faith demands the supernatural elevation of the subject as well as the supernatural revelation of the object. It would demand this, even if we were in the integrity of nature, and had suffered no damage from sin. It demands it, then, *a for-*

tiori, in our actual state ; for, in consequence of sin, our will is turned away from God, and our understanding is darkened. We do not love the truth ; we are not able to perceive and appreciate the motives of credibility. We have ears, but we hear not; hearts, but we understand not. Let no man dream that by mere natural force, by mere intellectual acuteness, strength, or effort, he can elicit an act of faith. Faith is the gift of God. But what is termed the grace of faith is not an inward revelation of the word, is not needed to propound the word, to supply the defect of evidence, or to strengthen, in themselves considered, the motives of credibility ; but to incline the will to the truth, and to strengthen the intellect, to remove the scales which blind the eyes of the mind, so as to enable it to see and appreciate the motives of credibility which are already furnished, and which are amply sufficient to warrant the most undoubting belief. These motives are in themselves sufficient to meet the demands of reason, and ought to command our assent, and we have no excuse for not yielding it. When we do not yield it, the fault is ours ; not in the defect of evidence, but in the perversity of our will, which hinders the grace of God from flowing into the understanding, and producing that state of mind in which to believe is easy, and without which to believe is morally impossible. But this gracious assistance, which inclines the will and elevates the understanding, is somthing very different from the private inspiration or illumination against which we have reasoned. The one merely puts us in the condition to believe a revelation already made and sufficiently accredited ; the other is a new revelation, superseding the external revelation, the external evidence which accredits it, and becoming itself both the word to be believed and the authority on which it is to be believed. The grace we allege to be necessary is everywhere promised us in the Holy Scriptures ; the private illumination we reject is nowhere promised us, and we have no reason to expect it.

We have now replied to all that the editor of the *Episcopal Observer* has suggested or, that is impiled in his suggestions, which has or can have any bearing on the question at issue. We have replied fairly and fully, because we have wished not merely to refute him, but to discuss the general subject, and place it in its true light before our readers. We shall expect a fair and logical reply to what we have said ; and if the editor of the *Episcopal Observer* do not give a fair and logical reply, we shall not hold ourselves bound to take any notice of what

he may allege. It becomes neither him nor us to discuss any subject unfairly, for neither of us can, we should hope, feel any complacency in a victory won at the expense of candor or of truth.

As to the portion of the *Episcopal Observer's* article which attacks the Catholic Church, since it has no bearing on the real question at issue, we do not hold ourselves bound by the rules of logic to reply to it. The question at issue, we have shown, is not what is possible *with* the Roman Catholic Church, but what is possible *without* it. Should the editor of the *Episcopal Observer* prove that faith is not elicitable by means of the Roman Catholic Church, he would not advance a single step in his argument; he would be no nearer proving that faith can be elicited without it, than when he commenced. To follow him in his attacks on the church would only be giving him a chance to change the issue, and make the question turn on the merits of Catholicity, and not on the merits of Protestantism, to which we will neither contribute nor consent. He promised to refute our argument, and we hold him to his promise. If he succeeds in proving that he can have the faith required without the Catholic Church, he proves all that it is necessary to prove in order to refute us. If he does not prove this, no matter what else he proves, he does not refute us. When he shall admit that he cannot prove this, and frankly abandon his Protestantism, we will meet all the difficulties he can allege in the way of eliciting faith by means of the Roman Catholic Church. But till then, he has no right to call upon us, nor are we bound by the nature of the question at issue to meet them.

Were it not that we will not consent to divert the discussion from the point we have made, we could easily remove all the difficulties the editor of the *Episcopal Observer* has suggested; for they are all founded in mistake as to the actual facts of ecclesiastical history, or misapprehension of Catholic faith and theology. When he speaks of the number of books which a Catholic must read in order to ascertain what he is to believe, he denies the distinction between faith and theology to which we called his attention, and overlooks the distinction between explicit faith and implicit faith, which was recognized in our definition of faith, and which he will find explained in the early part of our present article. The whole Catholic faith may be found in the catechism, and may be learned without any book at all; for the Catholic Church does not, like Protestantism, make the

knowledge of letters the condition *sine qua non* of salvation. Our friend forgot himself, and took up against his own side. It is not necessary to salvation that we believe *explicitly* all the truths Almighty God has revealed, but that we believe them explicitly or *implicitly*. He who believes the church is from God and infallible, and who is in the disposition of mind and heart to believe whatever she proposes, believes, implicitly at least, the whole revelation of God, and in its "exact sense"; for, if infallible, the church can propose it in no other than its exact sense, as "it lies in the mind of the Spirit." *

The *Episcopal Observer* asserted that the articles of faith were expressed in the Holy Scriptures in propositions "as clear and as intelligible as language can make them." We denied this, and alleged in support of our denial that the articles of faith are more clearly and definitely expressed in the creed and decisions of the church, which is evident from the fact that men perpetually dispute as to their meaning as expressed in the Holy Scriptures, while they do not dispute

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* To believe something explicitly is to believe it under the proper and particular terms under which it is proposed to us. Thus, he, who believes the Son of God assumed human nature and is God and man, believes explicitly the mystery of the Incarnation; he who believes the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost are one God and three persons, believes explicitly the mystery of the Trinity. But to believe something *implicitly* is to believe it in another; either as in a more general principle in which it is contained, or as in the doctrine of the teacher to which it pertains, or as in a shadow or figure, which is known to have significance, although the thing signified is not clearly apprehended. But it must not be inferred from any thing in the text, that belief in this last sense is the only faith that is of necessity as the medium of salvation. It is necessary to believe *explicitly* God as the author of the order of grace, that he will reward the just with beatitude and will punish the wicked, according to the words of the blessed apostle, Heb. xi. 6. "He that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that seek him." Also, as Catholic doctors in general teach, it is necessary to believe explicitly the mysteries of the Incarnation and of the Trinity, for, according to the words of our blessed Saviour in St. Mark, xvi. 16, "He that believeth not (that is, believeth not the Gospel) shall be condemned"; and in St. John, xiv. 1, "Ye believe in God; believe also in me"; iii. 36, "He that believeth not the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him"; and, according to the words of St. Peter, Acts iv. 12, "Nor is there salvation in any other. For there is no other name under heaven given to men whereby we must be saved." From these and many other texts which might be adduced, it is evident that explicit faith in the principal or primary doctrine is necessary as the medium of salvation. All we would say is, that the number of articles necessary to be believed with *explicit* faith is very few, and therefore the necessity, save when it concerns establishing truth or overthrowing error, of the long study the *Episcopal Observer* alleges, does not exist.

as to their meaning as expressed in the creeds and decisions of the church. The editor of the *Episcopal Observer* meets the argument by alleging that there are disputes among Catholics as well as among Protestants. But even if this were true, our argument might still be sound; for it was urged only to prove that the faith as expressed in the Holy Scriptures is not expressed in propositions *as* clear and as intelligible as language can make them,—which is not disproved by proving that there are disputes among Catholics, but only by proving that these disputes are equal to the disputes among Protestants, and extend to as many points of faith;—a fact the *Episcopal Observer* has not proved, and cannot prove. But there are no disputes among Catholics that turn on the meaning of an article of faith. There are disputes among Catholics, we admit, but they are disputes concerning matters which are not of faith, which the church has not decided. Not one of the instances the *Episcopal Observer* cites is a dispute concerning an article of faith, but all are disputes on questions on which there is no decision of the church, or which are not covered by her decision. The dispute between the Gallicans and Ultramontanes is not, as it supposes, a dispute as to the meaning of a canon. Both parties admit the canon of the Council of Florence, which the editor quotes; both parties agree as to its meaning; and dispute only as to questions it does not cover. The question as to the temporal authority or supremacy of the Holy Father is a dispute among doctors, and has nothing to do with faith at all; *for no article of faith, no decision of the church, claims temporal supremacy or authority for the successor of St. Peter.* The temporal authority which was possessed by the popes was not possessed by virtue of their office as visible head of the church, but, if one may so speak, by virtue of what was the common law of Europe;—because that authority was an integral part of the political order which then obtained. That order has now passed away, and the office which for many ages was filled by the ecclesiastical power is now filled by the money power; and the part of mediators between the temporal princes, which was played by the Gregories, the Innocents, the Bonifaces, is now played by the Barings, Rothschilds, and Biddles; whether for the better or for the worse it is not for us to say.

The *Episcopal Observer* is quite mistaken in saying, that in reference to these disputes we cannot avail ourselves of

the distinction between faith and opinion. "This," it says, "is a valid plea for Protestants, but not for Romanists. *We* say that agreement in great fundamental truths is necessary; and we say, further, that in these vital truths there is between all *orthodox* Protestants a substantial agreement, while they disagree only on those minor topics which are matters of opinion only. But this distinction between faith and opinion, whoever else it may serve, can avail Mr. Brownson nothing; for he avers that it is necessary to believe the whole revelation as the condition *sine qua non* of salvation, that faith consists in believing *all* the truths God has revealed."—pp. 332, 333. The distinction between faith and opinion we can avail ourselves of, but not of such a distinction as the *Episcopal Observer* points out. The distinction we contend for is a distinction between what is revealed and what is not revealed. What is revealed we hold to be of faith; what is not revealed is matter of science or of opinion. We can, then, very consistently contend that the whole revelation must be believed, and yet tolerate differences on matters of opinion. But the distinction the *Episcopal Observer* speaks of is a distinction *in the revealed word itself*, and presupposes one part of revelation is of faith, and another part of minor importance, a matter of opinion only. Of this distinction we do not wish to avail ourselves, for we do not admit that any part of God's word is a matter of opinion only; and we would thank the *Episcopal Observer* to tell us by what authority it can say that any thing God has revealed may be rightfully treated as a matter of opinion.

The *Episcopal Observer* makes it a sin in us, that "opinion has no place in" our "creed." Is that which is held as *opinion* held as one's *creed?* What is the meaning, in theological language, of *credo?* If one admits opinion into his creed, what is his creed but an opinion? The editor distinguishes between faith and opinion. Does he include in his *creed* any thing not of faith? Of course not. Why, then, complain of us for not admitting opinion into ours? But by what authority does he distinguish in God's word what is necessary to be believed, and what is not, and include the former in his creed, and exclude the latter from it?

The editor says, in these vital truths there is a substantial agreement between all *orthodox* Protestants. This is saying, in other words, that all who do not substantially differ do substantially agree! Who are *orthodox* Protestants, and by what authority can Protestants say who are or are not ortho-

dox? The only answer they have to the question, what is orthodoxy and what heterodoxy, is that given by the Protestant student: — "Orthodoxy is *my* doxy, heterodoxy is *your* doxy." Protestants are all orthodox, each in his own estimation; all heterodox in the estimation of each other. The editor of the *Episcopal Observer*, notwithstanding his airs, has no more right to call himself orthodox than the editors of the *Christian Examiner*, between whom and himself there is a fundamental difference, have to call themselves orthodox. Of all pitiable sights, the Protestant talking of orthodoxy is the pitiablest. The editor of the *Episcopal Observer* can claim to be less heterodox than his Unitarian brethren, only because he departs less from the Catholic faith; and the moment he alleges this, he recognizes the authority of the Catholic Church, which it is his main business to calumniate. It is worthy of note, that Protestants in general feel themselves sound in the faith just in proportion as they find themselves agreeing with the Catholic Church.

The editor would do well, when he wishes to attack the church on historical grounds, to be careful to draw his history from authentic sources. If he relies on such authors as Bishop Hopkins, or any authors his own church can furnish, he will be betrayed into many ridiculous mistakes. These Anglican ecclesiastical historians are in all cases unsafe guides, and in no instance, even in matters comparatively indifferent, have we found them worthy of reliance. The position of their pretended church is such that it is not safe for them either to see or to tell the truth.

The editor would also do well, before attempting to pit council against council, to ascertain what is a council, and that the Catholic predicates infallibility of no council not held to be œcumenical, and of no acts of an œcumenical council not approved by the sovereign pontiff. Had he known this, he would not have spoken of the *second* Council of Ephesus, nor have told us that "the second Council of Ephesus, held in 449, condemned Flavianus and sent him into banishment for rejecting the heresy of Eutyches; and the Council of Chalcedon, convened two years after, condemned and banished Dioscorus for maintaining the heresy discarded by Flavianus." — p. 330. For there was no *second* Council of Ephesus. The only Council of Ephesus was held in 431, before Eutyches had even broached his heresy. Nor was Flavianus ever condemned by any

council. The mistake of the learned editor arose, probably, from his confounding an illegal and tumultuous assembly, commonly known in history as the Ephesian *Latrocinium*, with an œcumenical council, which it was not, and was never admitted to be. This shows the necessity of studying ecclesiastical history, before attempting to write it.

Protestants frequently allege that council has contradicted council, council has contradicted pope, and pope has contradicted pope and council; but no instance of such contradiction ever has been or ever can be adduced, for no such instances exist. The instances commonly adduced are all founded in mistake, and are as easily answered as that about Flavianus and Dioscorus. The Protestant either calls that a council which was not a council, or he mistakes the real question decided, or the actual purport of the decision, in consequence of his general ignorance of Catholic theology and history.

But, as we have intimated, we have no intention of following the *Episcopal Observer* through his attack on the church. If he concedes his inability to maintain his own thesis, we will then meet him, or any one else, on the merits of Catholicity. But, till then, we will not consent to be diverted from the main issue we have raised.

In conclusion, we will say, our argument has run out to a greater length than we intended, and to a greater length than the feeble arguments, if arguments they can be called, of the *Episcopal Observer* really warranted; but we make no apology to our readers, for we have aimed to give to our remarks a general character, and a fair, full, and final discussion of that branch of the subject to which we have in the main confined ourselves, rather than to effect the comparatively insignificant purpose of refuting the editor of the *Episcopal Observer*.

THE CHURCH A HISTORICAL FACT.*

[From Brownson's Quarterly Review for April, 1846.]

We welcome a new American edition of Manning's *Shortest Way* with much pleasure. It is a work which was originally published in the early part of the reign of George I., but is as well adapted to the state of religious controversy now as it was then. It is written in a free and easy style, with now and then a pleasant touch of humor. It seizes and states with great truth and distinctness the real questions at issue between us and Protestants, and sustains the positions it assumes with proofs and arguments which must be conclusive to every honest and intelligent mind sincerely bent on ascertaining the one true religion. We can unreservedly commend it to our Protestant readers generally, and, if they will honestly and diligently study it, we are sure they will not fail to be convinced that our blessed Lord has in very deed founded a church with authority to teach, and that this church is the one in communion with the See of Rome.

We regard it as an especial merit of this little work, that it places the controversy between Catholics and Protestants on its true ground, and confines it to the real questions open for discussion between them. The only questions really open for discussion between them are, Has our Lord actually established a church with authority to teach? and, if so, Is this church the Roman Catholic or some other church? The particular doctrines we hold we cannot discuss with Protestants; because we hold no particular doctrines as doctrines of revelation which we believe or can establish independently of the authority of the church teaching them. That authority, if established, forecloses all debate on particular questions; for, if established, it is good authority for whatever the church teaches. As Catholics, then, we have done all, when we have established that authority. Protestants have made no progress in refuting us, till they have set that

**The Shortest Way to end Disputes about Religion. In two Parts.* By Robert Manning. Boston: 1846.

authority aside; and they can set it aside only by maintaining either that our Lord has established no church with authority to teach, or by showing that the church he has established is not the Roman Catholic Church, but some other church.

The infallibility of the church can be no special question; for it is necessarily implied in the divine authority of the church. The divine commission to teach necessarily carries with it the divine pledge of infallibility in teaching. It is repugnant to reason to suppose that Almighty God can authorize a church to teach, without rendering her competent to teach. But a fallible church, liable to deceive or be deceived, which may mistake or misrepresent the truth, and teach for the word of God what is not the word of God, is not competent to teach. When we say God authorizes the church to teach, or gives her authority to teach, we only say, in other words, that he holds himself responsible for what she teaches, or will own her doctrines for his doctrines. But if she could err, mistake the truth, and give us falsehood in its place, God could become responsible for error, and authorize the teaching of falsehood; which is both impious and absurd. If the church has authority to teach in his name, she is his representative, and we cannot reject her without rejecting him. "He that heareth you heareth me, and he who despiseth you despiseth me; and he that despiseth me despiseth him that sent me."—St. Luke x. 16. To discredit an ambassador is to discredit the government he represents. We must, then, accept what the church teaches, if she be authorized by him to teach, or be guilty of refusing to believe God himself. But, if the church were fallible and could teach error, the case might occur in which we should be obliged to believe falsehood on pain of disbelieving God. But by no possibility can it ever be necessary, in order to believe God or to respect his authority, to believe falsehood; for he is truth itself, and cannot deceive or be deceived. If, then, he has founded a church, and authorized her to teach, she must be able to teach infallibly. The question of infallibility loses itself, then, in the question of the divine commission or authority of the church. The divine authority established, the infallibility must be conceded.

Nor can there be any serious or protracted dispute, if it be conceded that Almighty God has established a church with authority to teach, that the Roman Catholic Church is the one he has established. There is, in fact, no other

church or pretended church which can with any show of reason claim to have received from God the authority to teach. All the oriental sects, except the schismatic Greek Church, are obviously out of the question, and need not detain us a moment. It cannot be the schismatic Greek Church; for it undeniably has, in the course of ages, changed on some essential points its ancient faith. On some points, at least, it has at one time believed differently from what it has at another, and therefore has erred; and if it has erred, it is not infallible; and if not infallible, it cannot be the church authorized by our Lord to teach. Moreover, Protestants cannot set up the Greek Church as the authoritative church; because it differs from them on all points except one, — the supremacy of the pope, — on which they differ from us; and it has by a solemn act condemned and anathematized all the distinctive doctrines of Protestantism. No Protestant sect is the church in question. Because, 1. All Protestant sects, by their own confession, are fallible; 2. They are all quite too recent in their origin; 3. No one among them is really a teaching body; 4. No one of them can put forth any claims to a divine commission, which cannot be urged with equal propriety and force by every other. The presumption is always against every communion separate from the Roman Catholic, in the fact, that the origin of every other communion, as a distinct communion, is subsequent, and, for the most part, long subsequent, to the times of our Saviour and his apostles. If our Lord founded a church at all, it is no more than fair to presume that she must date from his time or that of his apostles. Consequently, the fair presumption is, that any pretended church or communion, whose origin is of a more recent date, is not the church our Lord established. This presumption must be removed, before we can even entertain the question of the divine commission of any communion separate from the Roman Catholic. But this presumption never has been removed, and never can be. And, in point of fact, the common sense of Christendom seems pretty generally to admit, that, if our Lord has founded an authoritative church at all, it must be the Roman Catholic, because obviously it can be no other.

This being so, Protestants must either accept the Roman Catholic Church and stand condemned for remaining out of its communion, or else take the ground that our Lord has founded no church with authority to teach. There is

no other alternative for them. *The Roman Catholic Church or no church.* That these are the only alternatives, we think is admitted by the common sense of Christendom. Intelligent Protestants now generally admit it, and take as their justification for not being Catholics the ground of no-churchism. The idea of a church formally constituted and expressly authorized by Almighty God to teach, to say authoritatively what is and what is not divine revelation, is very nearly, if not quite, an "obsolete idea" in the Protestant world. Protestants may, indeed, continue to speak of the church, but they no longer understand it in the Catholic sense. They do not mean by the term a body authorized by Almighty God to teach; but the aggregate of dispersed individuals who profess to receive Jesus Christ for their master; a voluntary association of individuals for religious purposes; or the doctrines, disciplines, organizations, institutions, originating in the Christian dispositions of individuals, and continued and sustained as the means of promoting what, in modern phraseology, is termed "the Christian life." The dispositions may have been produced or fostered by the Holy Spirit; but the church resulting from them, and which is their exponent, is of human origin. Jesus Christ may have wished to have a peculiar people, a people zealous of good works; and such a people he has and, most likely, always will have; but it is not necessary that they should be distinguished by any external mark or badge. This people, or rather these individuals, however scattered abroad or dispersed though all communions, may, in a general sense, if you will, be termed the church; and they, from time to time, in this place or in that, may organize themselves into distinct bodies or associations, with such by-laws and regulations as they judge proper or most consonant to the spirit or intention of their Master; but they have received no formal constitution from our Lord himself, and have no outward visible government to which they must submit on pain of being separated from the communion of Christ. This, in brief, is the prevailing notion of the church among Protestants, that to which all, though not with equal steps, are tending, and which, indeed, the more advanced have already reached. But this, evidently, is not the idea of a church founded by Almighty God, and by him expressly authorized, commissioned, to teach; for such a church has and can have no teaching faculty. It cannot propound the faith and cherish the piety of individuals;

for it is itself merely the exponent of the faith and piety which the individuals already have. The believers precede the church, not the church the believers. The church derives its doctrines from its members, not the members theirs from the church. It may *express* their faith, but cannot teach it. Obviously, then, a church in this sense is not a church having authority to teach; and the assertion, that our Lord founded a church only in this sense, is tantamount to the denial of the fact that he has founded any authoritative church at all.

It must not be alleged that we here give, as the views of Protestants in general, what in reality are only the views of Unitarians and those usually denominated liberal Christians. Liberal Christians, though apparently a small minority, are in reality, we apprehend, the immense majority of the Protestant world, so far as the Protestant world is on this side of infidelity; and it will never do, in forming our estimate of Protestantism, to leave them out of the question, or to count them either as few or as insignificant. They are, at all events, the more consistent and the more advanced portion of the Protestant world, and a sure index to the goal at which all, unless they retrace their steps, must sooner or later arrive. We see in them but the simple historical developments of the principles of the reformation. They are the legitimate disciples of the early reformers, and the Protestant reformation is much better studied in them than in the reformers themselves. If we would thoroughly appreciate any human system, whether of faith or philosophy, we must study it in its historical developments, and therefore in the disciples rather than in the master. In the master the system is still in germ, and its essential vices are concealed by the foreign matter which he retains from his former life,—matter which does not belong to the system, and which it, as it develops itself, will not assimilate, but cast off. The disciple seizes only what is essential to the system, consciously or unconsciously eliminates all the foreign matter accidentally connected with it in the mind of the master, and pushes its fundamental principles to their last consequences. Time thus becomes the best commentator, and the latest disciples are always the truest representatives of the system. Liberal Christians are, therefore, to be taken as the truest representatives of Protestantism. They are its latest disciples; they afford the historical developments of the doctrines of the reformers, and the historical developments of a doctrine are always to

be taken as the counterproof of its logical developments; for reason is in the race as well as in the individual, and history is nothing but reasoning on a large scale, logic reducing itself to fact.

The early reformers were born and brought up in the bosom of the Catholic Church, and retained after their revolt much which they had imbibed while they were Catholics. The system they were able to construct was not all of a piece, but a compound of new and old,—of Catholic truth and their own inventions. It was, therefore, necessarily inconsistent with itself. The old would not assimilate with the new, nor the new with the old. The moment it became subjected to a free development, this original incongruity of its parts must inevitably manifest itself. It has done so. A portion of the Protestant world, unable, or unwilling, to subject their doctrine to the action of their own minds, still hold, or attempt to hold, on to Protestantism as it came from the reformers, and amuse us by contending for elements which mutually contradict and destroy one another. But the rest, all who have some mental activity, some logical capacity, and who must have some consistency and coherence of parts one with another in the system they espouse, seize, some on the old, the Catholic elements retained, and follow them back to the Catholic Church, where they belong; others, on the new, the peculiarly Protestant elements, and push them to their legitimate results. Liberal Christians are of this latter class, and, therefore, systematically considered, the only legitimate Protestants, so far as Protestantism may be said to stop short of absolute infidelity. If there are others arranged on the Protestant side, they are following in the wake of these, returning to the church, or persons who cannot, will not, or dare not reason, or, if reasoning, want the courage or the honesty to act conformably to their convictions. In a logical survey of Protestantism, we can take as Protestants only those who are true to what there is in Protestantism that is peculiar, characteristic; and these are unquestionably the so-called liberal Christians. The views of liberal Christians are, therefore, genuine Protestantism.

Moreover, all Protestant sects, without a single exception, when the controversy is with Roman Catholics, as a matter of fact, take the ground of liberal Christians, of no-churchism, whenever they do not take openly that of infidelity. The Episcopalian, boasting his "admirable Liturgy," for the most part filched and diluted from us, is a churchman only

when his face is against dissenters; he is himself a dissenter, a liberal Christian, a no-churchman, the very moment his face is turned against Rome. The high-toned Presbyterian, claiming to have received the keys of the kingdom of heaven, with power to open or shut it to whom he will, in his warfare against the Roman Catholic Church draws his shafts from the quiver of his Unitarian brother, and only tips them anew with a more deadly venom. He is less of the gentleman, more of the savage, than the Unitarian; but both are ranged on the same side, drawn up on the same battle-ground, and fight with substantially the same weapons. So is it with all the sects. Whatever reminiscences of the church they may retain, or contend for in their disputes one with another, they all take, expressly or by implication, the ground of no-churchism, whenever it concerns opposing the Church of Rome; and since opposition to the Church of Rome is undeniably the essence of Protestantism, we have, and must be admitted to have, a perfect right to take the views of liberal Christians on the point in question as the essential views of Protestants in general.

Protestants, then, cannot deny the authority of the Roman Catholic Church, if they admit that of Christianity itself, without assuming the ground that our Lord has founded no church with authority to teach; and it is, as a matter of fact, in reality only by assuming this ground that they attempt to do so. But have they a right to assume this ground? We think not; for to their denial we may oppose the living, undeniable fact of the church herself, existing in uninterrupted succession from the very time of the apostles to the present moment, asserting herself to be the church of Christ, received as such for fifteen hundred years from the beginning by nearly all Christendom, and still received as such by the overwhelming majority of all who bear the Christian name. Here is a fact which cannot be denied, any more than the fact of the sun in the heavens. This fact is *prima facie* evidence that Christ did found a church, and that she is the church he founded. Now, before Protestants have or can have the right to say Christ founded no church, they must rebut this *prima facie* evidence, and prove that this church, which claims, and has so long been admitted, to be the church of Christ, is not his church. Here is a point our Protestant brethren do not seem to have duly considered,—a fact they are not at liberty to overlook.

Now, it will not be enough for Protestants to deny that

the church is the church of Christ, and then call upon her to produce her titles; because the question is not, Shall the Roman Catholic Church be admitted to be the church of Christ? but, Shall she be declared to be *not* the church of Christ? It is not a question of putting the church in possession, but of ousting her from a possession she holds and has held from the beginning, and for the greater part of the time without any serious opposition. The question is not on admitting the title of the church, but on impeaching it. The *onus probandi* is, therefore, on the shoulders of the party contesting it. It is for them to show good and valid reasons for setting aside the title of the church, and ousting her from her possession. A government *de facto* is, presumptively, a government *de jure*, and must be respected as such, till it is proved not to be. The Roman Catholic Church is unquestionably the church of Christ *de facto*, and is therefore to be presumed to be his church *de jure*, till evidence is produced which convicts her of usurpation. Protestants were born under the church, and owe her allegiance till they show that she has no right to their allegiance. This view of the case, which cannot be objected to, renders a simple denial of the right of the church to call herself the church of Christ insufficient to put her to her proofs, or to render it necessary for her to produce her titles. The denial must be sustained by reasons which, if admitted to be good, prove that she is not his church. We ask now our Protestant brethren to produce these reasons. They say the Roman Catholic Church is not the church of Christ. How do they propose to sustain their assertion? On what grounds will they make it good? They cannot say, as they seem now disposed to say, our Lord has founded no church, therefore the Roman Catholic Church is not the church of Christ; because they must prove that she is not the church of Christ, before they can have the right to allege that our Lord has founded no church. They have no right to say there is no sun in the heavens, till they have shown that what is and always has been taken to be the sun is no sun. How, then, will they prove that the church falsely assumes to be the church of Christ?

Protestants may *say* the Roman Catholic Church is not the church of Christ,—and this is, in fact, about all the proof they ever seriously undertake to give,—but their *say so* is not sufficient; because it is neutralized by the counter-assertion of the church herself. The assertion of the church

that she is the church of Christ is, at the very lowest, worth as much as their assertion that she is not. They are confessedly fallible; their assertion is therefore fallible and may be false; but she at worst is only fallible, and her assertion is no more likely to be false than theirs. On any hypothesis, Catholic assertion is as good as Protestant assertion; it may be infinitely better,—for the infallibility of the church is not an impossibility; but worse it cannot be. Consequently, the simple assertion of Protestants can never outweigh the simple assertion of the church, and therefore in the argument can amount at best only to zero.

Will it be replied that the church is the party interested, and that her testimony is therefore inadmissible? The argument may be retorted with equal, and, in fact, with more than equal force; for she is no more, but even less, a party interested than are the Protestants themselves. If they fail to impeach her title, they stand condemned before the world as rebels against God, as struck with the sentence of excommunication from the church of Christ, and out of the way of salvation; whereas she, if she fail in vindicating herself, is still as well off as they are, even in case of success. If the claims of our church were set aside, we should still occupy as high ground as the Protestants can. We should be members of a fallible church, with no infallible guide, and no infallible faith,—the precise condition they are in now, and would be in then. Evidently, then, the church is even less a party interested than are Protestants. Then, if they may testify against her, she may testify in her own favor. But, in point of fact, we claim for her only the right to rebut, with her assertion that she is the church of Christ, the unsupported assertion of Protestants that she is not. In a suit at law the defendant's denial is always sufficient to rebut the simple allegation of the plaintiff; and this is all we claim for the church. Her assertion, then, always, at lowest, neutralizes and reduces to zero the assertion of Protestants.

Protestants, then, must go further and introduce independent testimony to sustain their allegations. What testimony can they adduce? Will they say, the church has corrupted or does not teach the doctrines of Christ, and therefore cannot be the church of Christ? The allegation is good, if sustained. But how will they sustain it? Simple assertion will not answer; for the church asserts to the contrary, and her assertion is as good as the assertion of her opponents. How do Protestants know that the church has

corrupted or does not teach the doctrines of Christ? Have they received authority from Christ to teach or expound his doctrines, and to say, infallibly, what they are and what they are not? Of course not; for they are confessedly fallible. But the church is only fallible, even at worst, and therefore is as good authority for saying the doctrines of Christ are what she declares them to be, as theirs is for saying they are not. Their fallible authority is therefore insufficient to convict her of corrupting or not teaching the doctrines of Christ.

But will our Protestant brethren appeal to the Bible, as an independent authority, and say, that, notwithstanding the fact of the church, they have a right to go behind the fact, and prove from the Bible that the Roman Catholic Church is not the church of Christ, by proving that Christ founded no church? We object to this, in principle; because the certainty that the Bible is given by divine inspiration is subsequent to the fact that the church is the church of Christ, and therefore the authority of the Bible is not sufficient to set aside the authority of the church. But we will consent to yield up the church, if there be adduced a single text which clearly and unequivocally asserts, expressly or by necessary implication, that our Lord founded no church; though we will accept no inference drawn from the silence of the Bible, if silent it be, because the Bible does not profess to give a full account of all that Jesus did, but the reverse. — St. John, xxi. 25. But these restrictions, so far as concerns the question before us, are in fact unnecessary; for, in the first place, no text can be adduced which unequivocally declares or necessarily implies that our Lord founded no church; and, in the second place, there are many passages which expressly teach or necessarily imply that he has founded a church, and given it authority to teach all nations even unto the consummation of the world. — St. Matt. xxviii. 19, 20. Certainly the Holy Scriptures, *as the church understands them*, plainly and unequivocally teach that our Lord has founded and commissioned a church to teach. The appeal to the Bible, therefore, is for us and against Protestants.

Will Protestants say, the church misunderstands or misinterprets the Holy Scriptures? But how know they that? Are they themselves infallible interpreters of the Word? If so, they refute themselves; for they can be infallible interpreters only on condition that they have received from

Christ authority to teach; and if they have received authority from Christ to teach, they are a church with authority to teach; which is the fact they deny, since they assert that Christ has founded no church with authority to teach. If they are not infallible, they are fallible, and then can oppose to the understanding of the church only their own fallible interpretations. But the church, as we have seen, is at worst only fallible, and no more likely to err in her interpretations than they are in theirs. Consequently, their interpretations can never be a sufficient motive for setting aside hers, since she is as likely to be right as they. The Holy Scriptures necessarily cease to be an independent authority the moment it comes to their interpretation; for then they only say what the interpreter makes them say, and the authority which speaks is not theirs, but his; and here is the reason why they can never be that rule of faith which Protestants allege them to be. No controversy between us and Protestants is or can be settled by an appeal to them; for as we interpret them they sustain us, and our interpretation must be set aside, before they can be used against us. But, unhappily for the Protestant, let him do his best, he can bring against our interpretation no authority paramount, even on his own hypothesis, to that of the church. Here is the fatal defect of all his reasonings against the church. They are all based on an authority confessedly not paramount to hers; for, if she be fallible, we still have all that Protestants have or can pretend to have. We have the Holy Scriptures, reason, common sense, as well as they. We may have infinitely more than they; for an infallible church is infinitely superior to a fallible one, but in no contingency can we have less. At worst, we have all they have at best. We are men as well as they, and, man to man, every way their equals. Strip us of our infallible church, we should suffer an infinite loss; but even then we should only be reduced to the utter nakedness in which they are and glory to be. This is a fact that they are apt to forget; but, if they will bear it in mind, it will suffice to show them that all their attacks are from too low a position to make any impression upon the church. They must rise to an infallible authority themselves, before they will be able to set aside the claims of the church to be the church of Christ.

There are but two ways in which it is possible for Protestants to impeach the title of the church. The first is to

convict her of contradicting in her teaching some known principle of reason; the second is to convict her of having contradicted herself, or of having taught doctrines which mutually contradict one another. No church can be from God that teaches, as the word of God, any doctrine which contradicts a known principle of reason. But we say a known *principle* of reason. A doctrine may be repugnant to our feelings, it may run athwart our prejudices, fancies, or caprices, and therefore seem to us very unreasonable, and yet contradict no known *principle* of reason. It must also *contradict* reason. A doctrine may be *above* reason, belong to an order lying altogether out of the range of reason, and yet *contradict* no known principle of reason. To be *above* reason is not necessarily to be *against* reason. The church unquestionably has taught, and continues to teach, doctrines which are above reason, and concerning the truth or falsity of which reason has nothing to say; but no doctrine that contradicts any known principle of reason. Even the holy mysteries of the adorable Trinity and the blessed Eucharist form no exception to this assertion. They are above reason, incomprehensible to reason, inpenetrable mysteries, we admit; but there is nothing in them or connected with them, that the church commands us to believe, which contradicts reason in any respect whatever. The Unitarian has never demonstrated, never can demonstrate, the falsity of the doctrine of the Trinity; nor has the Sacramentarian ever detected any contradiction of reason in the Real Presence. The most either can say is, that reason of her own light does not affirm them.

Again; the church never contradicts herself, or teaches doctrines that contradict one another. She doubtless modifies her discipline, and changes her canons, repeals old ones and establishes new ones, according to the exigencies of time and place; but she never teaches at one time or place a doctrine as of divine revelation, which she does not teach as such in all times and places. The assertions of Protestants to the contrary are all founded on misapprehension or misrepresentation of her actual teaching. No real instance of contradiction of herself, or variation in doctrine, has ever been detected by even the most learned and subtle of her opponents, and never will be. Nor does she ever teach one doctrine which contradicts another doctrine she teaches. Even her enemies are struck with the systematic consistency and coherence of her teaching. The infidel Saint-Simon declares

that her catechism and prayers are the most profoundly systematic works ever written.

It is clear, then, that in neither of these ways can Protestants impeach the title of the church. They can, then, sustain none of the allegations set forth in their declaration against her; because they can produce no authority in their support paramount to that which they must, on any hypothesis, concede to her. Her simple denial is always sufficient to render nugatory all they can adduce against her. Their objections thus removed, her title stands good, and they are bound to respect it. Every man has the right to be accounted innocent till he is proved guilty, and a *prima facie* case must be made out against him before he can be put upon his defence. Now, as nothing the Protestants do or can bring forward is sufficient to deprive the church of the presumption of innocence, or to turn it against her, they are obliged to respect her as the church of Christ, and are therefore precluded from alleging that Christ founded no church with authority to teach. They cannot, then, in order to excuse their heresy and schism in not being Roman Catholics, fall back on no-churchism. They must either become Roman Catholics or fall back still further. They must deny the authority of Jesus Christ himself, and fall back on *Infidelity. The Roman Catholic Church or Infidelity*,—these, in the last analysis, are, after all, the only possible alternatives, as we have shown, from a different point of view, on more occasions than one.

No doubt, this conclusion is offensive to our Protestant friends, and we would gladly say something more grateful to their feelings, if we could. It is no pleasure to us to displease others; we take no delight in giving pain to a single mortal. But charity, as distinguished from a sickly sentimentality, not unfrequently compels us to utter unpalatable truths. If we love our brethren, if we really desire their spiritual and eternal welfare, we must not, for fear of disturbing their equanimity, or of wounding their feelings, forbear to tell them the dangers which surround them, and the untenable ground on which they attempt to stand. Men may say what they will, seek to deceive themselves or others as they may; but it is still true that between Catholicity and infidelity there is no middle ground on which a man who can reason and is not afraid to reason can take his stand.

Protestantism, in the hands of the reformers, as we have seen, was not all of a piece, but a compound of heterogene-

ous elements. The reformers brought with them from the church several important elements of Catholic truth; but these elements had and could have no affinity for the new elements introduced. The new elements were in their nature repugnant to these, and must either expel them or be expelled by them. The latter would have been the death and annihilation of Protestantism; the former alone was compatible with the continued existence of Protestantism. The history of Protestantism, from its origin to our times—its internal history, we mean—is simply the history of the mutual struggle of these two classes of elements; and the great and astonishing progress, *religious* progress, of the Protestant world for these three centuries, and of which we now hear so much, consists exclusively in throwing off more and more of the Catholic truth,—Catholic error, as the Protestant would say,—and reducing the whole Protestant system into harmony with the peculiarly Protestant elements, or new elements introduced by the reformers themselves, and for the sake of which they broke away from the church. The struggle of the new and the old, we have seen, so far as the new gains the victory, results in liberal Christianity. But liberal Christianity, if it be not absolute infidelity, is not, after all, the last result. There is "a lower deep," or a further progress, inevitable, before the whole of Protestantism is harmonized with the peculiarly Protestant elements.

If we take up Protestantism as we received it from the reformers, analyze it, and subtract the Catholic elements retained, the remainder will unquestionably be what is peculiarly or distinctively Protestant, and all that Protestantism has a right to call her own; for we unquestionably have a right to claim as ours, and deny to be hers, all she has stolen from the church, or which is part and parcel of the teachings of the church. The Catholic truth abstracted, there will be found to remain for Protestantism, in its essential elements, only a revolt against God, the denial of his authority in his church, and the attempt to set up man in the place of God, and to make him worshipped as God. In a word, it was, undeniably, simply the assertion of the superiority of the human over the divine; for the Bible, for which it contends, is, *when humanly interpreted*, only a human authority. Subject the matter to the most rigid analysis possible, and you shall never make more or less of Protestantism than this. This is it, and the whole of it,

when reduced to itself, and compelled to operate with its own essential elements. Now it needs no argument to prove that this is in reality, if not in fact formally, modern infidelity; for modern infidelity, in its essential elements, is simply the substitution of man for God,—the assertion of the superiority of the human over the divine. Protestantism, in so far as it is Protestant and distinct from Catholicity, is essentially the same thing, then, as infidelity. It is in vain you deny it. There is not a dogma insisted on by Protestants, that, when divested of every Catholic element, is not infidel, or that any avowed infidel is not ready to admit. The infidel finds occasion to dissent from the Protestant only when and where the Protestant agrees with the Catholic. This is a fact of no mean importance, and proves that Protestantism, in so far as Protestant, is only another name for infidelity. Where, then, is the middle ground between Catholicity and infidelity, on which one can stand?

If we turn to the historical developments of Protestantism, we shall find this conclusion confirmed. We exclude, as of no account in the argument, the large mass of Protestants who receive what is given them, and merely follow, if they move at all, the beck of their leaders; because in these there are no developments; but if we confine ourselves to the leaders, to those who have labored for and effected some development of Protestantism, we shall find that every new development has cast off an additional portion of Catholicity—Popery, as it is called—and brought the Protestant system a step nearer to this result. Liberal Christianity, in which, to say the least, the Protestant sects have for the most part resulted, is much nearer open, avowed infidelity than the teachings of Luther and Calvin. New England Calvinism is resulting or has resulted in Unitarianism; but Unitarianism, as taught by Worcester, Ware, and Norton, has still too much of *Popery* to satisfy the younger members of the sect; further developments are attempted, and we find reproduced the naturalism of Parker, the pantheistic idealism of Emerson, or the rank humanitarianism of our old friend Ripley and his Fourierite associates. Survey the Protestant world calmly, and you shall find very little firm belief in Christianity as a supernatural and authoritative religion left. The mass of intelligent men among Protestants, who profess to believe it at all, profess to believe it as a philosophy rather than as a religion. But Christianity is not believable as a philosophy, till divested of all that distin-

guishes it, or is peculiar to it as Christianity. Men believe it as a philosophy only in proportion as they *infidelize* it, reduce it to mere naturalism, which is to deny it as a divine revelation altogether. Here is the grand fact of the Protestant world as it now is. The most it does, as a Protestant world, is to take refuge in liberal Christianity. Liberal Christianity indeed! For it liberates man from all restraint but the restraints of his own nature, and freely gives away all that is peculiarly or distinctively Christian.

There is no mistaking the inevitable tendencies of the historical developments of Protestantism. They are *humanizing* and materializing every department of life. Man becomes the central figure of every group. All begins and ends with him. Human sentiments of kindness and liberality are raised above the theological virtues of faith, hope, and charity; and it is conceived to be the greatest service we can render our age, to assert everywhere the supremacy of man, and to enable him to stand "alone in his glory,"—or his shame. The love of man, philanthropy, usurps the place of love of God, and the authority of human instincts and passions that of the Creator and Lord of the universe. We see this everywhere. The whole modern popular literature of the anticatholic world, that literature which is the exponent and the intellectual nourishment of the masses, is unblushingly infidel, immoral, and indecent. So far, then, as logical conclusions confirmed by historical facts afford any ground of reliance, we may repeat that the alternatives are infidelity or the Roman Catholic Church. It is the just judgment of God, that, if you will not have his religion, you shall have none.

Is it not time for the serious-minded still in the Protestant ranks, who are startled by the developments of Strauss and Parker, and who would not willingly "deny the Lord that bought them," divest themselves entirely of the robe of Christ's justice, and stand before God and before man in utter nakedness, to ask if it be not better, after all, to return to the church of our forefathers, than to plunge headlong into the bottomless hell of modern infidelity? We grant, their prejudices against the church are strong and deep-rooted, and that nothing but the grace of Almighty God can overcome them; but is not the alternative of rejecting the church terribly appalling? In the heyday of our youth, with ardent passions and buoyant hopes, unsubdued by the world's cares and vicissitudes, feeling ourselves sufficient for

to-day and thoughtless for to-morrow, we may turn a deaf ear to the invitations and warnings of religion, and look upon infidelity as a light and pleasant companion; but as age creeps on, the curls of beauty fall from our temples, the lustre of our eyes grows dim, and the world begins to look sear and sombre; as we experience in ourselves the vanity of our young dreams, and find our early companions, one by one, dropping away; or when, with the fond anxieties of a father or a mother, we see our children growing up around us, and are forced to look forward and ask what in our love we desire for them or are willing to leave them to, we no longer view infidelity with complacency, or find ourselves able to rest in its cold negations, without any shelter from the fickle and heartless world, any protection from its gay fancies, its hollow friendships, its fatal allurements, and its strange and sudden vicissitudes. Then, for them, if not for ourselves, we ask for a God, a Saviour, a temple, an altar, a priest. The French infidel, teaching his beloved little daughter the prayers and catechism of the church, reveals the workings of paternal affection, its want of confidence in all systems of mere human speculation, and its deep and earnest cry, that, if not for us, O, at least for our children, let there be religion, let there be faith, hope, and love. We beg our Protestant friends who still retain some reminiscences of that faith which has tamed the wild barbarian heart, which has made weak and timid woman dare to face the horrors of the amphitheatre, or joy to greet the martyr-flames that waft her soul to heaven, that has converted the nations, made all earth consecrated ground, and covered it over with the monuments of its purity, tenderness, and beneficence, to pause and reflect well before they consent longer to contribute to swell the tide of infidelity and immorality which threatens to overrun the modern world, and bring back the ages of barbarism and heathen darkness and corruption. In the name of all that is sacred, by motives as sweet as heaven and terrible as hell, we implore them to retrace their steps, and seek some surer footing than the slippery rocks, with fiery billows rolling below, on which they now are attempting in vain to stand.

But to return; if there be any force in the reasoning we have thus far set forth, it is in vain that Protestants attempt to deny that our Lord has founded a church, or that the Roman Catholic Church is the church he has founded. They are bound, then, to be Roman Catholics, or boldly deny the authority of Jesus Christ himself in every sense

in which it differs from the authority of Plato and Newton, Leibnitz or Locke, and fall back on absolute infidelity, which is only another name for absolute death. This is enough for our present purpose, and excludes the Protestant world from all right to call itself Christian. The negative proofs we have offered are sufficient to vindicate the title of the church; but if any of our readers are disposed to go further and inquire for the affirmative proofs of the church,—for she has affirmative proofs in abundance,—we refer them to the work before us. They will find them ample, clearly and convincingly set forth. But for ourselves, we do not need them. The simple *historical existence* of the church is enough for us. It is idle, with the grand fact of the church before our eyes in all ages, from the apostolic to our own, to pretend that our Lord has founded no authoritative church, and equally idle to pretend that it can be any other than the Roman Catholic. Even Protestants themselves, no-churchmen as they are, with an inconsistency to which they have been perpetually condemned, very generally admit that the Roman Catholic Church was once truly the church of Christ. It is, then, for them to show when she ceased to be the church of Christ, or to admit that she is still his church. They cannot deny her to be still his, unless they convict her of having changed. But she has never changed; no historical research can convict her of having ever fallen into schism, or of having taught at one time a doctrine which she does not teach now, or of teaching now a doctrine she has not uniformly taught from the beginning. She stands ever the same, the immovable but living type of the unchangeability of that God whose spouse and representative she is; and so long as we behold her standing before us resplendent in her robes of light and love, as young, as beautiful, as glorious as when she struggled for her very existence with Jew or pagan, or concealed herself in caves and cemeteries, we ask no other refutation of liberal Christianity, or its impudent offspring, infidelity. We see her standing by the grave of the old world, and at the cradle of the new, unmoved, as the torrents of wild barbarians pour down from the North, and hear her voice sounding out over the weltering chaos they introduced, and commanding order to arise out of confusion; we find her moulding a new social world, sending out her martyr-missionaries to all lands, and converting all the nations not hitherto converted to the Christian name; we trace

her unchanged and unchangeable through all the vicissitudes of eighteen centuries, the rise and fall of empires and dynasties, the loss of one world and the gain of another, as the one grand central fact around which revolves the history of the world, and in which it finds its unity and its significance, and we bow down our rebellious head and worship. You may tell us she is a masterpiece of human wisdom and skill, the *chef-d' œuvre* of human contrivance; but in vain. We have heard of human contrivances, and are not ignorant of human history or human philosophy, and can but smile in your face when you tell us she is the creation of human craft and passion. Tell that idle tale in the nursery, not to men with beards on their faces, lest they talk to you of a strait jacket, physic, and good regimen. Behold her, where she stands, exposed to all the storms of human passion and all the rage of hell, for eighteen centuries, as young, as beautiful, as vigorous, as when her chief disciple returned to Rome to seal his apostleship with his blood; bend your knee, beg to be forgiven, and say no more of human contrivance. Human contrivances! You have had them. Your glorious reformation is but a human contrivance. For these three hundred years you have had free scope for human contrivance, you have revelled in human contrivance; you have contrived and contrived, rejected one plan and then another, adopted now this one, now that, altered it now here, and now there, but with all your wisdom, genius, craft, passion, aided by all your boasted progress of modern times, what have you been able to construct to compare in exquisite proportion, in the beauty and symmetry of the whole and coherence of the parts, in strength, durability, and admirable adaptation to the end for which it was designed, with this glorious old Catholic Church, which nor time, nor men, nor devils can effect, and which you would fain persuade us was the handiwork of besotted monks and effeminate priests in an age of darkness? You are of yesterday, and yet your works crumble around you; they rot and fall, and bury the very workmen in their ruins. O brethren! for God's sake, nay, for the sake of our common humanity, say no more. Put that idle dream out of your head, return to your allegiance, and find the covert from the storm you in vain shall seek from your own handiwork.

LIBERALISM AND CATHOLICITY.

[From Brownson's Quarterly Review for July, 1846.]

The following letter comes to us from a very estimable young Protestant minister of our acquaintance, and for whom we have personally a very high regard. It was occasioned by a conversation we recently had with him, in which we labored to impress upon his mind that he was bound in prudence and in morals to give the great question of Catholicity, at least, a fair, candid, and thorough investigation. We do not know whether he expected us to publish his letter or not; but it deserves a reply, and a more elaborate reply than we are just now able to give it, unless we may at the same time make it answer the purpose of an article in our *Review*. Moreover, the "obstacles" of which he speaks may be in the way of others as well as of himself; and therefore, in replying publicly, we may be doing a service not only to him, but also to a whole class, and perhaps a very numerous class. We suppress his name and residence, that we may not have even the appearance of betraying any confidence, expressed or implied, which he may have reposed in us.

"——— April 9, 1846.

"Dear Sir:—

"I have considered your arguments, saving this month's number, which I have not yet read. But there are certain obstacles which prevent the reasonings from having much weight, and seem to me to make the case logically hopeless.

"I. I do not object to your position, that 'faith is impossible out of the Catholic Church'; for the only 'Catholic Church' I can acknowledge at present comprises 'those who share the faith and salvation of Christ,' so that this becomes an identical proposition. The epithet 'Roman' to me neutralizes that of 'Catholic.'

"II. Again, if *faith* means any thing else than trust, or apprehension of things spiritual, whichever definition I choose to take (as distinct from intellectual belief of given propositions), or if *salvation* means any thing else than the progressive enlightenment, freedom, and spiritualizing of the soul (as distinct from the deliverance from impending torture in the flames of hell), you must be aware that such other interpretations of these words require some authorized interpreter to sustain them. You cannot suppose I am ready to accept such interpretation without

proof; and you would hardly be guilty of such a paralogism, as to make use, in argument, of a proposition sustained by an authority which it is the very purpose of your argument to lead me to accept. And if you quote Scripture (as Mark xvi. 16 and Heb. xi. 6), you must be aware, that, even granting absolute authority to every word of Scripture (which is the utmost limit of intellectual faith a non-Romanist can have), I am at perfect liberty, by my own principles, to give any such explanation to any of the words as is in accordance with my general belief and prevailing habits of thought. As a matter of logic, then, whatever else your arguments may be, they cannot have any force to draw me towards accepting your position. As I said before, logical Romanism and logical liberalism are each complete and consistent in itself, and there is no passage-way of reasoning between them. As for illogical Protestantism, you may seize on its inconsistencies, and force it logically to one or the other of these two positions; but when it has reached either of them, it takes something besides argument to bring it over to the other.

"III. There is another difficulty in the way of your argument, which you have not met to my own satisfaction. To accept the claims of the Roman Church either involves an 'act of faith,' or it does not. If it does, this is the same as saying that an act of faith (granting your own definition and usage of the phrase) is required, preliminary to any possible, or even supposable, act of faith; which is absurd. If, on the other hand, such acceptance does not involve an act of faith, then the investigation of the claims of that church becomes a purely intellectual process, requiring only the clearness of mind and moral honesty which any other intellectual process requires. And on my ground (I do not say on yours), it is utterly wicked and absurd to denounce any penalty beforehand upon any result deliberately and candidly arrived at. Such denunciation would be a defiance of the first and simplest axiom of all reasoning together between man and man; namely, that no threats must be introduced, or any extraneous element whatever, to influence the determination either way.

"I do not say that no Protestant can ever become a Romanist. This would be to contradict well known facts. But I do say that no purely logical process can suffice for such a result; and this impossibility your own arguments have abundantly shown. Of course, until your proposition of the authority of the Roman Church is accepted, your deduced assertions or corollaries (such as the impossibility of faith without it, the superiority of its culture, and the peculiar blessedness of its belief or ritual) must go for nothing at all. You must be logician enough to see this, and its bearing on the minds of your Protestant readers. And I do not see how you can avoid perceiving that your whole train of reasoning is a paralogism; because the authority and necessity of the Roman Church are assumed in every single step, and consequently your arguments can have no logical weight with one who does not accept them.

"I do not blame you for thus assuming and continually bringing forward what has become the principle and groundwork of your faith. It would be inconsistent with my own principles not to welcome, or at least respect, every evidence of faith and sincerity, coming from any quarter of that Holy Catholic Church or spiritual communion, which includes every pure thought, and righteous desire, and holy life of every age. It would be painful to meet one who differs from me, even in grave matters, as perforce an antagonist. The Roman hierarchy, not the faith of Romanists, is what, with my understanding, I am steadily opposed to; and far be it from me to reproach any one for his adherence to that which gives him life and strength. But I do wonder a little that you should use the arguments and appeals you do, supposing they can have effect on those you mean to influence; or else that by a false show of logic you should seek unfairly to bewilder, and perhaps convert, those who are not prepared to understand or appreciate the real points of difference. You could not much value such conversion as that.

"You rightly speak of this as (on your ground) the gravest question that a man can propose to himself. You cannot consent that it should be answered in a bewildered, sophisticated, and hurried state of mind. And the real answer to it, as you must know, is through the history of the church and the world. A profound historical investigation, a thorough appreciation of the grounds of historical evidence, a familiarity with the events and lessons of past ages, and especially a clear and systematic understanding of the religious and intellectual culture, as well as political and social institutions, of the human race, are the essential preliminaries to the intelligent and independent determination of that question. My argument (III.) must convince you that this is the only way to answer it; at least, the only way in which I should be willing to answer it. And for those who have not ability or leisure for such an inquiry, we need not imagine their case must be hopeless. As I believe the Roman Church itself acknowledges unavoidable ignorance will be pardoned; and the true condition of salvation is, that each should act up to the measure of faith or of light he has.

"There are two methods of argument by which one may be led from his own to another form of belief. The one is purely logical, proceeding from certain common principles, known and acknowledged on both sides. I think I have abundantly shown that this method can have no weight with a consistent and intelligent Protestant. The other is historical; based on a critical investigation of past facts and institutions, and involving an amount and kind of labor and learning, which must, from the nature of the case, be attainable by very few. As to the latter, which I maintain to be the only legitimate method of establishing your position, you must be aware how very incompetent I am at present to carry it to a certain conclusion. In the mean time, it is only laying claim to that amount of honesty which every opponent of common sense must allow (or else all his arguments are but bullying and sophistry), to say,

that whatever shall seem to me established I shall acknowledge and profess, whether Romanism or "No-Church." And from the axiom (which every religious inquiry demands), that a just and merciful God presides over the issues of human life, I cannot possibly feel any alarm or distrust in pursuing such an investigation with perfect independence of mind, or feel the smallest hesitation or scruple in acting consistently with my present convictions, until a course or reasoning like that I have indicated shall compel me to abandon them.

"Till then I am yours in respect, though in dissent."

The first remark we make on this letter is, that it fully concedes, what we have so often asserted, and what is becoming a very general conviction, that there is no middle ground between liberalism — no-churchism as we call it — and Catholicity. This is much, and augurs well. It proves that the writer has good stuff in him, that he is no *via media* man, trying to steer his course equidistant between truth and falsehood,— no time-server, no trimmer, no logical coward, shrinking from the avowal of the legitimate and necessary consequences of his own premises. It is true, he at present inclines strongly to the side of liberalism, but this does not discourage us. He will hardly need to try liberalism as long and as thoroughly as we tried it, before he rejects it, and gladly embraces Catholicity. If he retains any consciousness of a single religious want, if he ever feels himself, as all not utterly reprobate do and must feel themselves, oppressed with a load of guilt, and beset on every hand with numerous, powerful, and vigilant enemies to his virtue; or if, in some trying moment of his life, he is forced to send an anxious glance into the darkness which for him must brood over the tomb, and which no ray from natural reason can furrow, even for a single instant, he will never be able to content himself with mere liberalism, but must demand, whether he find it or not, something less vague and negative, something more positive, more illuminative, more effective to heal, to elevate, to protect, and to sanctify the soul.

In replying to the objections urged in the letter before us, we shall not follow precisely the order adopted by the writer, but an order which better suits our own convenience, and which will better enable our readers to perceive the bearing, connection, and force of what we have to offer. Whatever the writer of the letter intended, his objections are, strictly speaking, not so much objections to the church, as to our method of setting forth and defending her claims; but we shall consider them both as they

affect our own reasoning and as they affect the question of the church herself. The principal objections urged are resolvable into the two following, namely:—1. The authority of the church is, in its nature, unprovable. 2. An act of faith in the Catholic sense is impossible. These are regarded as objections *a priori* to Catholicity, and requiring to be removed before any argument or testimony in her favor can be introduced.

I. The authority of the church is, in its nature, unprovable. This, the writer contends is evident from our own arguments; all the arguments we have used or can use in support of the church involve a paralogism; for they all proceed from premises which it requires the authority of the church to furnish or legitimate. We begin with what concerns the arguments we have ourselves used. The writer alleges in effect against them: You conclude the church, without which faith is not possible, from the necessity of faith to salvation. But the church is as necessary to prove to me that faith is necessary to salvation, or that there are or can be such things as faith and salvation in the sense you contend, as it is to enable me to elicit an act of faith. We reply,—

1. That our argument involves a paralogism, when adduced in defense of the church against those who do not admit salvation and faith as its indispensable condition in the sense we allege, may be true; when adduced as an *argumentum ad hominem* against those who admit both, we deny. But it was only as an *argumentum ad hominem* we adduced the special argument objected to. We were reasoning against those Protestant Christians who admit our premises; and our design was to show them, that, on their own principles, they are bound either to accept the Catholic Church, or to deny the possibility of salvation.

2. Though in one part of our argument we argue as the objection alleges, yet in the main argument itself we do not. By recurring to the article entitled *The Church against No-Church*, the only article we have published in which we give a general argument for the church, it will be seen that our point of departure is further back, and that we proceed to argue to the church from the necessity of faith to salvation not till after we have established both faith and salvation in the very sense in which we take them in the argument. That we began by assuming "the divine origin and authority of the Christian religion" we

grant, because we were defending the church against one who claimed to be a Christian, and a Christian minister; and we judged it, as we said expressly, to be discourteous to reason with him as we should with a Jew, Pagan, Mahometan, or Infidel. We presumed we had a right to take him at his word, and that it would be superfluous to go further back in our argument than to the simple assumption of the Christian religion as a divine and authoritative religion. Assuming the divine origin and authority of the Christian religion, we proceeded to establish, by authorities that could not be objected to without rejecting Christianity altogether, that all who receive it at all are logically bound to receive the Catholic Church, or admit that Christian salvation, whatever it may mean, is impossible. This argument is legitimate, not only against those who admit salvation, and faith as its indispensable condition, but also against all who admit the Christian religion at all as a divine and authoritative religion.

3. If only a part of our general argument be taken, it involves a paralogism when urged against those Protestant *Christians* who reject Christianity altogether, we concede; that it does when taken as a whole, we deny. The writer objects to the argument because he takes only that part of it which had a special purpose, and overlooks it as a whole. In the article referred to, we go back of Christianity itself, and point out and defend the method by which the divine authority of the church may be established against those who reject all revelation, on the ground of our correspondent, that the supernatural is not provable. We then show that the authority of the church is provable without any *argumentum ad hominem*, or the assumption of any premise which reason is not competent to furnish or legitimate. It must be shown what we have there said is not to the purpose, is unsound in principle, or unsustained by facts, before we can be rightfully accused of attempting to prove the church by a paralogism.

4. Moreover, we publish, reviewer as we are, our arguments in detached essays, and nowhere profess in any one essay to give a complete view of the argument for the church, or of all we may have to adduce in her defence. It is necessary to take what is urged in one essay, though not in another, so far as pertinent, as an integral part of our general argument. The essay our correspondent has noticed is simply a reply to some special objections raised by the *Episco*

pal Observer to a part of the reasoning in our previous article on *The Church against No-Church*, the main purpose of which was not to prove the church against all classes of objectors, but against a special class, as its title indicates; though, in prosecuting the argument, we took occasion incidentally to indicate the method of defending the church against several classes. But in the same number we inserted, from the French of the celebrated Dr. Evariste de Gypendole, an article which professes to defend the church, not against one class of objectors only, but against all objectors, past, present, and to come; and which actually contains, amid a world of wit and pleasantry, not duly appreciated by our unbelieving readers, an argument absolutely conclusive, in which we defy all the intellects in the world to find the least flaw or fallacy. If Christianity had a miraculous origin, or if the phenomena it exhibits are inexplicable without a miracle, it is from God, is his truth, and you have nothing to do but to receive it as such. Mrs. Jones, at her distaff, or any old woman in the land, of either sex, knows enough to know this. If you deny miracles, be so good as to explain the introduction of Christianity into the world, its reception, spread, and preservation as a divine, authoritative religion for eighteen hundred years, down to the present moment, among what on all hands must be conceded to be the most civilized, enlightened, and moral portion of mankind. There stands the fact before you, and there it has stood in all ages and in all lands for eighteen hundred years, no more to be denied or mistaken than the nose on your face. In some way you must explain it; and it will require a miracle a million times greater to explain it without a miracle, than it will to explain it with a miracle. Here is what the excellent doctor proves, and which you do not seem to have remarked.

Does our Protestant minister doubt it? Let him reflect, that, however agreeable or acceptable the Christianity he contends for may be to natural reason and the natural heart, the Christianity the race has believed, and still persists in believing, is quite another thing. The Christianity it has believed, and still persists in believing, is repugnant to our whole nature. It mortifies our pride, crucifies our natural propensities, balks and baffles our reason, commands our detachment from the world, the abandonment of our dearest and most cherished interests, the entire renunciation of ourselves, and the total surrender of even our reason and will, all that we have, and all that we are, to an absolute author-

ity, in whose decisions we have no voice, and which, be they what they may, we must receive without question, and from the heart and conscience obey, without reserve and without reluctance. Does this commend itself to our young friend? Is he prepared to accept this religion? Will he go down on his knees before a man like himself, perhaps even a sinful man, and tell him all the secrets of his life, all his offences, his most filthy acts and thoughts, even those which he reddens to recall in the silence and solitude of his own self-examination? Will he? Not he. He can hardly restrain himself as he reads our statement. All that he regards as noble and manly in his nature rises indignant, as he contemplates this religion even at a distance. He feels that such a religion outrages all his rights and dignity as a man. He looks with a sort of loathing on the mean-spirited slaves who not only consent to wear, but even voluntarily bow down their necks to receive, its degrading and debasing yoke. It is too much for him. His benevolence is fired, his higher and nobler instincts are aroused, and, as it were, call out to him from the very depths of his humanity to rise, arm himself, go forth and strike, and strike home, for freedom,—to break asunder the bonds of the insulting tyrant, and liberate his long enslaved brethren from their thraldom,—to knock off, and forever, those fetters which have rusted into their flesh, and eaten into their very souls. So feels, so speaks, human nature in our young friend, when he contemplates the Catholic religion. But human nature in all ages, and in each individual, is essentially what it is in our young Protestant minister; and in all, and in every age, then, it must, so far as human nature, have manifested the same repugnance to this religion it does in him, and been as opposed to its reception as he finds it. Does he think this religion could ever, without a miracle, have gained a footing in a world presenting such an opposition as his? Could even he, without a miracle, embrace it? Yet it has gained a footing, and become the dominant, the only progressive religion of the race. Men have received it, have believed it, have submitted their reason to it, bowed down their stubborn wills to it, have fought for it, have suffered the extremest tortures for it, died for it, allowed themselves to be burnt, to be crucified, to be torn by wild beasts for it, and, perhaps, more than all, have *lived* for it, and lived it. How, on the principles of human nature, without the intervention of Almighty God, without a miracle, a perpetual miracle, could this relig-

ion make its way in the world,—not only without, but in despite of, the civil authority, against an opposition as strong as that which our young friend experiences, perpetually renewed in each age and in each individual submitting to it? But if you concede the intervention of the Almighty, if you concede miracles, it is from God, is his religion: the controversy is ended, and the "bite in the head" is radically cured. Here is no paralogism, but a rigid induction from incontestable facts, and absolutely conclusive against all objectors, past, present, and to come, as the excellent Dr. Evariste de Gypendole justly maintains. This argument, though extracted from an admirable little French work, we have a right against the opponents of the church to claim as ours, The writer of the letter is mistaken, then, when he assumes that we argue to the church only from premises not attainable without assuming the authority of the church.

5. Nor does what the writer alleges, with regard to our use in controversy of the Holy Scriptures, sustain his assumption that we respond to our opponents only by a logical fallacy. There are two senses in which we can legitimately quote the Scriptures:—1. Against all classes of opponents, as simple historical documents, not authenticated by the authority of the church, but in the same way as we authenticate Herodotus or Thucydides, Xenophon or Diodorus Siculus, Livy or Tacitus, Eusebius or Ammianus. In this sense, after having authenticated, we have just the same right to quote them for the historical facts they record, as we have any other historical documents; and these facts are legitimate against all objectors, from whatever point of view they object. 2. The second sense is as authority against all who profess to hold them to be the word of God, and to take them as the sufficient and exclusive rule of faith; on the ground, that every man is bound by the logical consequences of his own principles, that it is lawful to conclude against a man from his own admissions, to convict him on the testimony of his own witness. In this last sense, the argument is an *argumentum ad hominem*. In the essay on *The Church against No-Church*, and in the subsequent articles we have published in defence of it, we have quoted the Scriptures, it is true, but never except in one or the other of these senses. When reasoning against those who do not hold the Scriptures to be the word of God, we quote them only as simple history, but as an authentic history, which no one can successfully question; but when reasoning against those who

concede them to be the word of God, we quote them in either sense. The objection so common among Protestants, that Catholics cannot quote the Scriptures in defence of the church, without involving themselves in a *vicious* circle, arises from their not distinguishing between the Scriptures as historical documents, and the Scriptures as the inspired word of God. To prove that they are the inspired word of God, and therefore matter for divine faith, we need the authority of the Catholic Church; but to prove them to be historical documents, and good authority in regard to the historical facts they record, we do not need this authority. We cannot prove them in that sense in which they may be a rule of faith, without the authority of the church; and if we quoted them in this sense in defence of our positions, save as an *argumentum ad hominem*, we should indeed be guilty of the paralogism alleged. But this we do not do. In the sense of history, we do not depend on the authority of the church to authenticate them, and therefore may legitimately quote them in defence of our positions against all classes of objectors, without being guilty of any logical fallacy at all, any more than we should be in quoting the public acts of the Jews and Romans, or the historical facts which make in our favor, recorded or alluded to by Pliny, Tacitus, Celsus, or Julian. Is this distinction, which is very real, too nice, too subtile, for our Protestant doctors? If not, why do they disregard it, and constantly allege that we take the church to prove the Scriptures, and the Scriptures to prove the church?

6. Nor are we debarred, by danger of a paralogism, from quoting Scripture in defence of our positions, by the fact, that our opponents have the same right to put their explanations upon the words of Scripture that we have to put ours upon them. Grant, says the objector, in effect, absolute authority to the words of Scripture, still I have a perfect right to give them such explanations as are in accordance with my general belief and prevailing habits of thought, and these explanations you cannot set aside without assuming that authority of the church which you are to prove, but have not as yet proved, because it is the very point in question. But it is necessary to distinguish. If his explanations do not violate the plain, natural sense of the words in the connection they stand in, and are authorized by the ordinary rules of understanding books, discourse, or language in general, we concede his right to give them; otherwise, we deny it.

For, if he were at liberty to give an arbitrary meaning to the words, an obscure, unheard of, or unnatural meaning,—as if, where he reads *yes*, he should understand *no; God*, he should understand *man; grace*, he should understand *nature; life*, he should understand *death; heaven*, he should understand *hell*,—he would not yield absolute authority to them, which the objection concedes; indeed, he would yield to them no authority at all, and admit in them no independent sense by which he would or could be bound. If he concedes the absolute authority of the words of Scripture, he can have no right of explanation incompatible with that authority. He must, then, in all cases, be bound by the plain, obvious, natural sense of the words, according to the ordinary rules of understanding language in general. If not, language would at once be annihilated, and there would be an end to all interchange of thought between man and man.

But as either party has the same right to his explanations, and as there is as yet no umpire to decide between them when their explanations clash, both parties must, as a matter of necessity, confine themselves, in their use of Scripture, to what is clear, express, about which there is and can be no reasonable dispute; we do not say about which there may be no cavil, for there is nothing at which there may not be cavil; but about which there can be no reasonable question, —no question, in a fair, candid, or prudent exercise of reason. But so long as we confine ourselves to what is clear and express, to what is expressly said or *necessarily* implied, if the words are to be taken in a plain, obvious, and natural sense, we have a right to quote Scripture in defence of our positions, and in doing so, we fall, necessarily, into no paralogical fallacy. In what we quote from the Scriptures, we confine ourselves always to what is clear and express to our purpose, and never adduce texts in any sense but that in which it is evident they must be taken, if taken in any sense at all. Our Protestant minister, then, we repeat once more, is mistaken in his assumption; we do never employ the logical fallacy he assumes we do,—as he himself would have perceived, if he had considered our arguments more attentively before raising his objections to them.

II. But it is time to pass from the objection as it concerns the arguments we have used, and to consider it more immediately as it concerns the arguments which may be used. The writer's thesis, we must bear in mind, is, that the authority of the church is logically unprovable. "I say,"

he says, "that no logical process can suffice for this result [the conversion of a Protestant to Catholicity], and this impossibility *your own arguments have abundantly shown*." That our own arguments do not show this is evident from what we have said. The most he can say against our arguments is simply that they do not prove that the authority in question is provable; but from this he cannot legitimately conclude that there are *no* arguments that can prove it. Moreover, the only argument of ours he has noticed, and from which he argues against us, is simply an *argumentum ad hominem*, designed to convince those Protestant Christians who profess to believe in salvation, and faith as its condition *sine qua non*, that they must accept the church, without which faith is not possible, or deny the possibility of salvation. To argue, from the fact that this argument does not prove the authority of the church to those Protestant *Christians* who reject Christianity altogether, that the authority of the church cannot be proved by argument, is very much like arguing, from the fact that a certain cobbler is not a good sculptor, that there is not and cannot be a good sculptor; but it is hardly lawful to conclude, because a given thing is not done in doing a certain other thing, that it cannot be done at all.

But what else does he bring forward to sustain his position that the authority of the church is unprovable? Nothing, nothing at all. He has, in fact, offered not a single reason to show that it is not as provable as any other position which may be taken. He begins by telling us that he has considered our reasoning, but there are certain obstacles which make the case logically hopeless. He assumes that there are certain *a priori* objections, which place the authority of the church on such a footing that no argument in its defence can be entertained. This he should have made appear, but this he has not done. He has surprised us with no new objection, and the objections he has urged are nothing but objections which might have been taken from ourselves, *minus* our answers. We anticipated him in all he has said on this point, and answered him in advance,—as he would have seen, if he had read what we wrote, or taken leisure to master what he read. We assure him that we do not understand his right to urge against us objections we have ourselves taken up, without condescending, at least, to notice our answers. It may be a convenient way to refute a man, to take up the objections he raises against himself, and suppress his

answers, and one of which Protestants in their controversies with Catholics not unfrequently avail themselves, as we have in our own case had occasion to remark; but whether it is the most honest or even honorable way in the world or not, we leave to others to settle.

The objection of our friend, simply stated, is, that the authority of the church, being supernatural, and lying out of the range of natural reason, cannot be legitimately argued to from any premises which natural reason can supply, or which can be valid for natural reason. This objection is precisely the objection we raised against ourselves, and attempted to answer, in our essay in defence of the church, already more than once referred to. That we cannot argue to it from premises supplied by natural reason alone, as the object of divine faith, we concede; but that we cannot as the object of human faith, we deny; and this is sufficient for our purpose; for, if we are able to argue to the authority of the church from premises that are valid for natural reason in that sense in which reason objects to it, it is false to say that it is not provable to natural reason. In proof that it is provable by natural reason to natural reason, which is the real point, as we shall hereafter show, we simply advert to what we replied when raising the objection ourselves to the church as the supernatural witness to the fact of revelation, in the article, *The Church against No-Church.*—pp. 368–373.

There we proved clearly and conclusively, that the authority of the church is provable, or not *a priori* unprovable; and also how it may be proved, and proved with infallible certainty,—not with the infallible certainty of divine faith, of course, but with that of human faith,—which is all the certainty we for the moment were concerned with, and which, since it is all reason can demand, is infallible in relation to reason. In doing this, we prove that we have a good case, that we may be permitted to come into court, and adduce testimony in our defence. Our Protestant minister, then, must yield or join issue with us, not on the law, but on the evidence; and this issue we of course are prepared to meet. But he will not trust himself to this issue. There never would have been much controversy concerning the facts in the case, if the authority they are adduced to prove had not been assumed in the outset to be unsusceptible of proof. Christianity is rejected, whenever it is rejected, before the facts which sustain it are discovered to be uncertain or insufficient. Their doubtfulness or in-

sufficiency is an after-thought, resorted to to justify the rejection to ourselves or to others.

III. The second general objection urged is, that faith, in the Catholic sense, is impossible. We do not understand the author of the letter to deny the possibility of faith in general, but the particular species of faith we contend for. He denies what Catholics call divine faith, but not simply intellectual or human faith. This we gather from what he himself says. He defines faith to be trust or apprehension of spiritual things; and though he distinguishes this from intellectual assent to given propositions, we do not understand him to mean that intellectual assent is never to be yielded to any propositions at all, but only to a given class or order of propositions. That he wrote the letter before us is a given proposition, to which the intellect assents or does not assent. *Our* intellect assents to it. Is this assent unauthorized? If he says it is not, he concedes intellectual assent; if he says it is, he also concedes intellectual assent, because he cannot deny that it is authorized, without assenting intellectually to a proposition. Two and two are four. Here is a given proposition, in regard to which he must say he intellectually assents to it, intellectually dissents from it, or is unable to say whether he assents or dissents; but in one case or another he intellectually assents to a given proposition, though not to the same proposition. He who denies affirms; for the denial affirms the falsity of what is denied; and when the denial and affirmation are in the same order, both as to the subject and as to the object, one is as much an act of faith as the other. When, by the grace of God, we deny liberalism to be the revelation of God, we make an act of faith as well as when by the same grace we affirm the truth of Catholicity. Universal denial is impossible; because he who denies at least affirms his own existence as the subject denying; and no man can doubt that he doubts. Moreover, the writer, in defining faith to be trust or apprehension of things spiritual, necessarily concedes faith in the sense of intellectual assent to given propositions. He will not say, most assuredly, that in that apprehension of things spiritual, which he calls faith, the things apprehended are denied, but must concede that they are affirmed. If affirmed, there is intellectual assent to a given proposition; for nothing but propositions are ever affirmed or denied. Trust also implies belief, and belief as distinguished from that intellectual

assent termed knowledge; for it refers always to the future, of which we have and can have no direct and positive knowledge. The sun will rise to-morrow, is a given proposition. The writer doubtless *trusts* that the sun will rise to-morrow; but he could not so trust, did he not so believe. Belief is necessarily in all cases the basis of trust. But belief is always and necessarily an intellectual assent to a given proposition; since it would obviously be a contradiction in terms, either to say that a man believes what he does not intellectually assent to, or that he believes without believing any thing. We are, therefore, bound, in simple justice to the writer, to presume, that, when he distinguishes faith from intellectual assent to given propositions, it is not his intention to deny all intellectual assent, nor all faith in the sense of intellectual assent to given propositions, but only intellectual assent to given theological propositions, or that species of faith which Catholics denominate divine faith. Hence the impossibility of eliciting faith, which he asserts, we must restrict then to divine faith, and not extend to all faith, whether human or divine. Furthermore, we do not, in the objection we are about to consider, understand the objector to affirm the impossibility of eliciting faith on the ground that the authority is not possible, but on the ground that it is not possible to elicit it by means of the authority. If he took the first ground, this objection would resolve itself into the one we have just examined, and would be answered in what we have already said. But he distinguishes it from that, and evidently does not intend to adduce it as an additional proof of the impossibility of the authority, but as a proof that the authority, if proved, would avail nothing, since it is impossible by its aid to elicit an act of faith in the Catholic sense. The evident intention of his argument is to disprove, not the possibility, but the utility, of authority. Hence, we must so interpret it as to save the possibility of the authority. This premised, we proceed to the argument.

"To accept the authority of the Roman [Catholic] Church either involves an act of faith, or it does not. If it does, this is the same as saying that an act of faith is required preliminary to any possible or even supposable act of faith, which is absurd; if it does not, then the investigation of the claims of that church becomes a purely intellectual process, requiring only the clearness of mind and moral honesty which any other intellectual process requires."

From which, we suppose, he would conclude that an act of faith is impossible, or, if possible at all, possible only as merely intellectual or human faith, neither of which Catholicity can admit. We reply,—To the first part of the dilemma, we concede the supposition, but deny the consequence; because the act of faith necessarily, as faith, includes both antecedent and consequent, and therefore the acceptance of the authority is the act of faith, not its preliminary. To the second part, we deny of course the supposition, but concede the conclusion. There is a difference between the investigation of the claims of authority, and its acceptance by an act of divine faith. The investigation is unquestionably a purely intellectual process, but the faith elicited on it may be not merely intellectual, but divine, as Catholicity asserts; because the investigation never motives the assent, but simply removes the intellectual obstacles to it.

The conclusion, in the first part, evidently rests on the assumption, that the acceptance of authority is distinct from and prior to the act of faith elicited on it, and therefore requires to be motived by a distinct and prior authority. This we deny, because,—

1. It involves a contradiction. If the objection proves any thing, it is not the impossibility of eliciting faith by authority, but the impossibility of authority itself, since it denies authority can authorize till accepted by us,—which is to deny it to be authority; for it is the essence of authority to authorize *per se*. But to deny the possibility of authority is to contradict the intention of the argument, which, as we have seen, was to concede the possibility of authority, and to prove its inutility. Moreover, the assumption involves a contradiction in terms, and is not supposable. There is a contradiction in terms, where the subject is denied in the predicate. But the assumption does deny the subject in the predicate. The subject is the authority of the church; the predicate is, that it cannot authorize unless accepted by us, or simply that it depends on us for its authoritativeness. But that which depends on any thing not contained in itself for its authoritativeness is not authority; for, as we have said, the essence of authority is to authorize *per se*. In making your assumption, you either suppose authority or you do not. If you do, you deny it in your predicate, since your predicate denies that it is in itself authority. If you do not, your argument concludes nothing, for your predicate has no subject.

The writer intended by this argument either to prove the impossibility of authority, or the impossibility of faith by authority. Not the first, as is evident from the terms of the argument itself, and from the fact, that if he had he would have been only repeating the argument in another form, which he had just urged, and which we have refuted in proving the authority provable; for, if provable, it cannot be metaphysically impossible. Then the second; but if so, he contradicts his intention, and makes the unsupposable supposition of an unauthoritative authority. He who supposes authority at all supposes, by the very force of the word, that which can authorize without any virtue but its own. This objection, then, is less creditable to the dialectician than to the "consistent Protestant."

2. We retort the argument. The objector, as we have seen, admits, at least, the possibility of human faith. But his argument, if it proves any thing, proves that no act of faith, not even of human faith, is possible. The assumption in the argument is, that authority cannot authorize *per se*, by its own virtue, but must be accepted by a preliminary act before it can motive an act of faith. This preliminary act of acceptance must be itself an act of faith; for it is absurd to pretend that we can elicit faith on an authority that we do not believe, or that the assent *on* it can transcend the order of assent *to* it. Then this preliminary act of faith will require a prior and distinct authority to motive it, and this in turn will require to be accepted by a new act of faith motived by a new authority, and thus on *in infinitum;* so that no act of faith can be assumed to be possible without the assumption of an infinite series of acts of faith, motived by an infinite series of authorities, which is infinitely absurd. According to this reasoning, there can be no authority for faith, and no faith on authority. But all faith is on authority; for the very definition of faith, as our correspondent well knows, is *assent on authority.* Therefore there can be no faith. This definition of faith is *per genus*, not *per differentiam;* and therefore assent on authority must be essential to faith in general, common to all the species of faith, and therefore to human faith as well as to divine faith. Faith, then, is assent on authority. But either the acceptance of the authority involves an act of faith, or it does not. If it does, this is the same as saying an act of faith is required preliminary to any possible or even supposable act of faith, which is absurd. If it does not, then

no act of faith is possible; for it is absurd to say there can be faith on an authority not believed. Our correspondent, then, must either deny the possibility of an act of even human or intellectual faith, or abandon the principle of his objection, and concede that authority may be competent to motive its own acceptance, and therefore its acceptance not necessarily imply a preliminary act motived by a distinct and prior authority.

If the writer insists, and denies that he concedes the possibility of even human faith, as specifically defined, we will go further, and retort his argument in the region of what is called knowledge. His argument, if admitted, proves not only that faith specifically defined is impossible, but that all science and intuition are impossible. He is a bold man who is prepared to deny all human faith, all human belief, and proves that he does not fear to take his stand on the very edge of the gulf of absurdity; but he who is prepared to deny all knowledge, whether discursive or intuitive, proves that he has already taken the plunge into the gulf itself. But he, who asserts that authority cannot authorize till its acceptance is motived by another authority, does deny not only all faith, but all knowledge, whether discursive or intuitive. Faith and knowledge, though specifically distinguishable, are generically the same. Both are assent, and assent on authority. The denial of all assent on authority is, therefore, the denial of all knowledge, as well as of all faith.

That all knowledge, whether discursive or intuitive, is assent on authority, is as certain as any thing can be to natural reason. Demonstration, as the word itself indicates, merely *shows* the mind the conclusion in its relation to some principle or principles which the mind holds to be indubitable. It is the preamble to the assent yielded, but in no conceivable case its motive; and hence it is, that we not unfrequently find persons, not destitute of intellectual ability, who resist the force of the clearest demonstration. Two things respectively equal to a third are equal to one another. The demonstration of this consists in the discursive process which enables the mind to perceive that the equality predicated in the one case is the equality predicated in the other. The motive of the assent yielded to the conclusion is the principle that the same is the same, things identical are identical, what metaphysicians call the principle of contradiction or of non-contradiction. In every

demonstration, the process is the same. The demonstration does not demonstrate its principle, but reduces the demonstrable matter to the principle or principles applicable in the case, and the mind assents solely on the authority of the principles. In discursive knowledge, it is clear, then, that there is, contrary to the principle of the objection, immediate assent on authority.

In intuition, whether internal or external, whether of principles or of material objects, it is the same. The same is the same; the same thing cannot both be and not be at the same time; whatever begins to exist must have a cause; no contingent being can exist without a sufficient reason, &c.; — are principles, however variously they may be expressed, which every reasonable being admits and must admit; but which cannot be proved, since every process of proof demands them as its postulates. We may be told that they are intuitively beheld; but this only means that they are beheld as constituent principles of reason, or simply as that which reason declares immediately to be necessary truth. The intuition does not seize them *in se*, but simply in reason, and the assent to them has and can have no motive but reason herself. Suppose the authority of reason, their validity is supposed; deny the authority of reason, and their validity is denied. The assent, then, to what are called first principles is solely assent on authority. In external intuition, the assent is also on authority. We behold a tree, a house, the sun; at least, so we say, but question the authority of our senses; how, then, could we say so? The assent we give to the proposition, we see a house, a tree, a man, the sun, or that in either of them we see a real object, rests for its motive on the authority of our perceptive power, and therefore is assent on authority. The whole of human knowledge, turn the matter as we will, resolves itself, in the last analysis, into assent on the authority of our faculties, that is to say, belief in our faculties; in science, belief in reason, in perception, in the perceptive power. No metaphysical analysis of either the objects apprehended, or of the faculties apprehending, can get behind this, as is easily proved; because, in attempting to verify the authority of our faculties, we must assume them, and the proof of them is necessarily the proof of the same by the same.

Now, to accept the authority of our faculties either involves an act of faith, or it does not. If it does, this is the same as saying an act of faith is required preliminary to any

possible or even supposable act of faith, which is absurd. If it does not, then no act of knowledge is possible. Therefore, either no knowledge is possible, or an act of faith does not necessarily demand an antecedent act of acceptance of its authority by virtue of an antecedent authority. Our young friend, then, must either abandon the principle of his objection, or deny all knowledge. But this last he cannot do, if he would; because he can make the denial only by virtue of his faculties, and in making it necessarily supposes their authority. But, their authority supposed, it is false to say there can be no knowledge. Moreover, he cannot affirm his objection against us, without making an act of faith in the faculties on whose authority he affirms it. This act of faith is legitimate, or it is not. If it is, his objection is unfounded, because a legitimate act of faith is possible; if it is not, the objection is unfounded, by the very terms of the proposition, because it is made on an illegitimate authority. So in either case the objection falls to the ground, and the writer is precluded from the right to urge it.

4. The assumption on which the argument rests confounds the act of faith with the act of reasoning. It denies faith to be possible, because it is not discursive; which is as if we should say, an act of faith is not possible, because, if possible, it would be an act of *faith*, and not an act of *reasoning;* or as if we should deny the possibility of Peter, because, if he should exist, he would be Peter, and not John. The argument assumes that in faith the authority is concluded by one act, and that which is received on it is concluded from it by another act, and then asks, But from what is the authority concluded? But this process is reasoning, not believing,—the act of discursion, not of faith. Faith, if it be faith, is *immediate* assent on authority, and therefore necessarily includes *in one simple, indivisible act of assent* both antecedent and consequent. This is faith; and faith, in this sense, we have shown, we must admit, or else deny the possibility of all demonstration and of all intuition. The solution of the whole difficulty lies in this distinction between faith and discursion. In discursion, we proceed by successive steps from antecedent to consequent; but in faith we do not. In reasoning we first conclude the authority, and then what the authority proposes; but faith does not conclude at all; it includes in one simple, indivisible affirmation both the authority and that which

the authority proposes. Had our young friend been aware of this rather important fact, he would have spared us his objection; for he would himself have seen that the acceptance of the authority in the act of faith does not require an act precedent to the act of faith motived by a distinct and prior authority. Hence, our denial of the consequence in the first part of the dilemma is justifiable, and for the reason assigned, namely, because the act of faith, as faith, necessarily includes both antecedent and consequent, and therefore the acceptance of the authority is the act of faith, and not its preliminary.

IV. This distinction between the act of faith and the act of reasoning solves also the difficulty there may seem to be implied in the second part of the dilemma, namely:— If the acceptance of the authority does not involve an act of faith, "the investigation of the claims of the church becomes a purely intellectual process, requiring only the clearness of mind and moral honesty which any other intellectual process requires." The investigation of the claims of the church, on either alternative proposed, is a purely intellectual process; for only the intellect investigates, and whatever objection to Catholicity this implies, we must meet it, on the supposition that the acceptance of the authority does involve an act of faith, just as much as on the supposition that it does not. But there is no objection implied, unless Catholicity teaches, or is obliged to teach, that the assent in the act of faith is by virtue of the investigation, or motives or reasons which investigation discovers and adduces, as is evident of itself. But this she neither does nor is obliged to do. For,—

1. It involves a contradiction in terms. Faith is immediate assent on authority, without any other motive than is contained in the creditive subject and the credible object, as already established. To make it depend on the motive adduced by investigation would be to make it depend on some motive not contained in the creditive subject and the credible object, and to make it, not faith, but reasoning; for then it would be mediate, not immediate, assent,—a logical inference from a given antecedent. But to assert that faith is reasoning, a logical inference, is to contradict one's self in terms, for it is to deny the subject in the predicate.

2. The assent to any proposition is never, in any case whatever, by virtue of the preliminary investigation, or

previous reasoning. This is evident from the analysis of the act of demonstration already given. In the act of reasoning there is never, strictly speaking, a new act of assent; for nothing is allowed to enter into the conclusion not previously contained and declared in the premises. The conclusion only repeats, in a more clear and definite form, if you will, what had already been asserted in the premises; and consequently, in assenting to it, we only assent to what we had already assented to in another form and under other conditions. No reasoning can be carried on for a single moment, unless all that is to be concluded is admitted before reasoning begins; and all that reasoning ever does is to clear up our knowledge, and show that sometimes, perhaps always, in assenting to what we do assent to, we assent to more than we are aware of, or that our principles have a wider and more varied application than we at first perceived or suspected. This is evident in regard to syllogistic reasoning, as the opponents of that species of reasoning have clearly demonstrated. But all reasoning is syllogistic, and there is no actual or possible argument that may not, as logicians show, be reduced to a regular syllogism. The distinction set up by some writers on logic between syllogistic reasoning and inductive reasoning has no foundation in reality. Every induction is an enthymem, and the suppressed premise may be easily supplied. But, however this may be, there is no advance of knowledge, that is, no new assent in induction. What is understood by induction, as the term is generally used, is simply generalization or classification,—that is, the assertion of a general law from the observation of a certain number of particulars; but the generalization, the moment it transcends the particulars observed, or is applied to other particulars, save so far as identical with these, and therefore improperly called *other* particulars, is in the predicament of the syllogistic conclusion which concludes what is not declared in the premises, and is a mere assertion, hypothesis, conjecture, or fancy. There is, then, and can be, in reasoning no new matter assented to; consequently, the assent given in the conclusion is only a repetition of the assent previously given in the premises, and as that was given prior to the act of reasoning, it cannot be motived by it, or be in virtue of it.

These two considerations show beyond the possibility of dispute, that Catholicity is not obliged to suppose the assent

of faith to be by virtue of the intellectual process of investigation, and could not do so without placing herself in conflict with all the laws of belief and of science. Reasoning never does and never can motive the assent; all that it is or can be in any supposable case is the mere preamble to the assent, removing such obstacles as may intervene intellectually between the creditive subject and the credible object. A great deal of useless labor would have been spared, if this fact had been more generally borne in mind. But Catholicity not only is not required to suppose the assent is by virtue of the investigation, not only has no right to do so, and would condemn herself if she did, but she actually does not. For,

3. The assent on the part of the subject she teaches is by virtue of the *donum fidei*, or supernatural gift of faith. The investigation, however successful, could not give us faith; it could only show us that the authority of the church and what she proposes are involved in what is already believed or assented to by us,—or simply, that we must either accept the church and what she proposes, or deny the fundamental principles of reason. But this would not be what she understands or intends by faith, nor the least conceivable approach to it. The act of faith, in her sense, is a supernatural act, requiring a supernatural object and a supernatural subject. Simple human reason is not the creditive subject, and cannot elicit the act of faith, unless supernaturalized that is, supernaturalized, *in quantum* creditive subject, by the *donum fidei*, which is not the act of faith, but the virtue of faith,—a supernatural elevation of the natural *vis creditiva*, or power to believe. This is the gift of God; not a natural gift, that is, not a gift given in the fact that we are human beings, but given supernaturally, in elevating us from the order of nature to the order of grace. Thus supernaturalized, the creditive subject is placed on the plane of the supernatural credible object, and they are thus correlatively creditive and credible; and if no obstacle intervene, the act of faith is not only elicitable, but elicited, without other motive than is contained in the subject and object, as is the case with every act of faith, whether human or divine,—by virtue, not of the preliminary process of reasoning, but of the *donum* or gift of faith supernaturally bestowed on the subject. This is what Catholicity teaches, and she affirms the possibility of faith on these conditions and no others. Therefore, conceding the investigation of the claims of the

church to be a purely intellectual process, it does not follow that the act of faith itself, whether understood of the assent to the authority, or of assent to what the authority proposes, is a purely intellectual act, or an act of faith on simple human reason or authority.

V. But our Protestant friend may reply,—Granting all this, it follows that you do not conclude the authority by a logical process; and this is precisely what I tell you. "I do not say no Protestant can ever become a Romanist [Catholic]. This would be to contradict well known facts. But I do say that no purely logical process can suffice for such a result, and this impossibility your own arguments abundantly show." And is not this precisely the sum and substance of what you have now, *ex professo*, proved?

1. This objection does not take us by surprise, nor find us unprepared with an answer. In the first place, we remark that the objection is here supposed in a sense somewhat different from the one intended in the letter. The objection there is not that a logical process cannot suffice because the subject cannot be, in relation to the supernatural object of faith, *creditive* subject, unless supernaturalized by the infused virtue of faith, or the *donum fidei*; but because the arguments we use in proving the credibility of the church all involve a paralogism, or the fallacy of attempting to prove the same by the same. This we have denied, and shown that our arguments in relation to their purpose as arguments are sound, and as strictly logical as arguments can be. This answers the objection in the sense intended by the writer.

2. In the second place, we have never pretended that the actual conversion of a Protestant to a Catholic demanded nothing more than a logical process, or that the assent of faith could be the logical consequent of a logical antecedent. To that conversion, to that assent, we have uniformly contended that the grace of God, the supernatural gift of faith, was not only useful, but necessary as the medium. The logical process was simply to show that such assent, though above our natural reason, is in accordance with it, and has all the conditions natural reason can demand or conceive to be essential. It was not urged as the motive of assent, or that by virtue of which the assent is elicited; for that we knew it was not, and could not be, for that it is not even in human faith. If the writer intended, then, to allege that the logical process is insufficient because it does

not and cannot supply the motive or virtue by which the act of faith is elicited, he objected to what was not in question, and was betrayed into the fallacy called *ignorantia elenchi*.

3. But, thirdly, we deny that the assertion of the absolute necessity of the *donum fidei*, as the virtue by which the act of faith is elicitable and elicited, militates in the least against the sufficiency of the logical process. There may be, and undoubtedly are, many operations for which logic does not suffice. It does not suffice to impart soundness to a gangrenous limb, to build a house, to navigate a ship, to paint a Madonna, or to chisel a crucifix; for in all these there is required a power which logic does not and cannot generate or furnish; but it would be absurd for this reason to pronounce the logical process insufficient, if it sufficed for what in any of these operations it is needed for, or for which it would not be illogical to demand it. That logical process suffices, which suffices for the legitimate purpose or end of a logical process, or which accomplishes all which, according to the nature of logic, there is for it to accomplish. In the case supposed, the conversion of a Protestant or unbeliever to Catholicity, ascertain what there is for which logic is needed, or for which logic, according to its office in other cases, can be demanded, and if it suffice for that, it cannot be pronounced insufficient, but must be held to be sufficient. This premised, we proceed to determine what it is logic, in the supposed case, is needed for.

1. The logical process is not needed, either in human faith or in divine faith (for in this respect both are the same), to supply any of the *positive* conditions of faith. The subject and object must both be given independently of the logical process, or not given at all; and the subject must also be given as creditive, and the object as credible. The logical process never furnishes, and is never required to furnish, the subject with the faculty of believing, or the object with the capacity of being believed. Our Protestant friend would hardly expect by a logical process to bring his horse to believe his liberalism, and the demonstration does not *make* the object credible, but merely *shows* it to be so. But all the positive conditions of faith are supposed when the subject and object are supposed, the one creditive, the other credible; because faith is immediate assent, demanding no motive or virtue but what is contained in the subject assenting, and object assented to, and this, too,

whether the object be naturally or supernaturally credible, and the subject naturally or supernaturally creditive.

2. The logical process is never wanted in the case of actual believers, or in that of the children of the faithful, until they make an act of infidelity. Nothing is wanting or can be added, where all the conditions of faith are present. The believer has in the sacrament of Baptism received the *donum fidei*, or grace of faith, and by this it is creditive subject, and the church has through her pastors and teachers proposed the credible object, and he has therefore all that is necessary or can be conceived as necessary to elicit an act of faith, and an act of faith having all the legitimacy any act of faith ever has, or which reason ever does or can demand. So in the case of the children of the faithful. They receive, when brought to the sacrament of Baptism, the *donum*, or virtue of faith, which gives them the power (as soon as their reason shall be so far developed as to render them capable of performing a proper *human* act) of believing, and the church is present to instruct them, to propose the credible object, and they elicit the act of faith at once, without the necessity of any previous investigation or logical process whatever. This faith is not blind, is not credulous, is not illegitimate; because it has all the conditions of faith which reason demands or can conceive. It is as reasonable, as enlightened, and stands on as high and as firm ground, as the faith of the most erudite scholar, the acutest dialectician, and the profoundest philosopher, elicited only after the most laborious researches, the most patient investigation, and the most penetrating and subtile analysis. Logic is not needed for believers, or for children, in case the children are baptized and properly instructed. These, then, we may leave out of the question, as sufficiently provided for, and as having no occasion, either in order to become believers, or to justify their faith to themselves, to resort to a logical process.

3. The logical process can be necessary only in the case of unbelievers, when they would inquire into the reasonableness of the faith, and when we would convict them of being unreasonable in not believing. In a word, the only occasion or necessity there is for a logical process is furnished by infidels and heretics. These are to be converted, and logic may sometimes be used as an effective instrument for their conversion. It is here, then, we are to look for the precise work there is for the logical process; and if it

suffices for what there is here for it to do, it suffices for all for which logic is needed, and is, therefore, sufficient.

4. As none of the positive conditions of faith depend on the logical process, we are concerned with unbelief only as it coexists with these conditions. If there is no belief because no creditive subject or no credible object, the difficulty is not a logical one, and it is illogical to demand its removal of logic. If all the conditions be present, the unbelief can arise only from some obstacle which obstructs their operation. This obstacle must be on the part of the object or on the part of the subject. It cannot be on the part of the object, if the church be present supernaturally proposing it, or within reach of the subject, if disposed to listen to her instructions. It must, then, be on the part of the subject. If on the part of the subject, it must be either in the defect of the *donum*, or on the part of the will, or the intellect, or both together. If in the defect of the *donum*, as that is one of the positive conditions of faith, it does not now concern us. Logic cannot obtain it, and we do not pretend that divine faith can be elicited without it; and yet it is always the unbeliever's own fault, if he have it not. If it is on the part of the will, the obstacle is a moral one, and we have nothing to do with it at present. It is, then, the individual's own fault that there is an obstacle to his believing, and to believe at any time is possible to him if he wills it. Nothing remains, then, but the obstacle on the part of the intellect, and it is only with intellectual objections that logic ever deals, or is expected to deal. What the logical process, then, is needed for, is simply to remove the obstacle to assent which is interposed by the intellect.

5. The intellect may and does raise numerous objections to the church; alleges that God has never revealed himself supernaturally to men; that he has never founded a church with authority to teach; that the Roman Catholic Church is not the true church, that it has become corrupt, is not what it was, has failed, and should no longer be suffered to cumber the ground; in a word, the objections urged by our young friend, and all that variety of objections quite too numerous to mention, which may be read—if one have the conscience to do it—in infidel and heretical books. These objections are nothing for the believer, because, having the *donum*, he has a higher authority for his faith than the simply human intellect, and therefore a higher authority than these objections can possibly claim or pretend to; and

to him, therefore, it is of no manner of consequence whether he knows the intellectual answer to them or not. But in the case of unbelievers, they obstruct the operation of grace, and hinder them from following it to the holy sacrament, in which they would receive the *donum*, and be able to elicit faith. They require in the case of these to be removed, and the ordinary instrument to which we resort for their removal is the logical process; though the grace of God may, and sometimes does, suffice to remove them without any preliminary logical process at all, or to produce faith in spite of them, and it is always better to rely on that, than on our investigation. But be this as it may, for those who demand a logical process, here is its work, its precise work, and its only work,—simply what we are doing or trying to do in the case of our young friend, to show that the objections urged by the intellect are unfounded, not authorized even by the intellect.

6. Now the precise question before us is,—Does or can the logical process suffice for this work? If it can, it suffices for all for which it is needed, and our young Protestant minister is refuted; if it cannot, we may be right in our belief, but mistaken in our logic. That the logical process can and does suffice for this we have shown in the former part of this present article, in reply to the objection that the supernatural is not logically provable, for we have shown there that it is logically provable. The supernatural does not require, as we have said, to be proved to the believer, because he has for his faith in the *donum fidei* what is above proof, and sufficient to override any objection the intellect can suggest; for by virtue of the *donum* he knows the truth of what he believes with an altogether higher certainty than it is possible for the objector to have in the case of the objection. In his faith, he has the authority of God against the objection; in the objection, he has only the authority of man against God. So long, then, as he is attentive to the graces he receives, and does not by his culpable neglect or deadly sin lose the *donum*, or obstruct its operation, it is absolutely impossible for him to doubt; for only the human intellect can doubt, and he has the supernaturalized intellect overriding the human, and silencing each of its questionings in the very inception. Thus faith, the undoubting faith of the believer, which secures him so much serenity and peace, does not arise from a blind obedience to authority, and a wilful closing of our eyes to

inquiry, as unbelievers and Protestants foolishly allege, but from the fact that he has really in the gift of faith a spiritual apprehension above all purely natural apprehension, and is able to affirm the truth from a higher stand-point than the boldest impugner of his faith can any one of his objections. For this no logical process, as we have said over and over again, can suffice or is needed. But this is possible to all who interpose no obstructions, that is, none of the will, and none of the intellect. Those of the will we have dismissed, as not concerning our present purpose; but we may remark, by the way, that the removal of the intellectual objections will do little for the actual conversion of the unbeliever, if his will remains opposed to the church; and as a matter of fact, in most cases, in a country where the church is known or is accessible, if we find a man who rejects her, we may at once conclude the principal cause is in the will, and that his intellectual objections are brought merely to sustain him in his moral repugnance to the church, and determination to resist her authority.' If there were no obstacles in the will, those in the intellect would amount to very little, and would soon disappear entirely. But the intellectual objections are all that now concern us, and these all have their seat in the intellect, as their subject, and rest on its authority alone. To remove them, by showing from intellectual *data* that they have really no foundation in the intellect, is perfectly logical; for, if we in replying to them assume the human intellect, we only assume what you assume in making them; and if our refutation is valid only in the sphere of the human intellect, your objections, granting them all that can be claimed for them, are valid only in the same sphere, since you have no more right to conclude from the human intellect *against* the supernatural, than we have to conclude for it. If you deny the legitimacy of this, we retort your argument; for its force consists in the fact that we cannot conclude the supernatural from the natural, since there can be nothing in the conclusion not in the premises, and the supernatural is not in the natural. But to conclude the supernatural negatively is still to conclude it, and this is what you do when from the natural you conclude against the supernatural. The proposition, that the supernatural is *not*, is no more in the natural, than the proposition, that the supernatural *is*. Your objections, then, can be assumed to have force or validity only in the sphere of the human intellect; all that is

required for their logical refutation is, then, simply to show that they have no force or validity even in that sphere. The logical process, as a logical process, suffices, then, for their removal, for it meets them with an authority as high as that on which they stand; and if from the human intellect we show they are without foundation, you must either abandon them or admit that the human intellect can contradict itself; and when we have driven an opponent to this alternative, he is refuted, in the only sense in which the word is ever used.

7. But our liberal minister, not quite comprehending our argument, may perhaps be disposed to object,—Granting that the logical process removes, or is competent as a logical process to remove, the objections the intellect may raise, still it does not suffice, for it does not prove the church. We say it does; for to remove all the objections the intellect can raise to a proposition is precisely what is meant, and all that ever is or can be meant, by the word *prove*. The proof in no conceivable case ever goes beyond the removal of the *prohibens*, the objections the intellect raises, as is evident from the fact we have established, that the assent is always immediate, without any other positive motive or reason than is contained in the subject assenting and object assented to, and in the further fact, that there never can be in the conclusion any thing not previously declared and assented to in the premises. To believe is normal, and to elicit faith nothing is needed but to remove obstructions; and as this is all, and because to believe is normal, and always follows the removal of obstructions, unless voluntarily withheld, the process of removing the obstructions is called demonstration, or proof. But, in strictness, the proof, the demonstration, is never positive, but always negative. When, then, we have removed the obstructions, shown that reason has nothing further to object, we say, and we have the right to say, according to the law in the case, and the uniform usage of language, that we have proved, demonstrated, substantiated, our proposition.

8. This holds good, also, in regard to human testimony. Not to believe on human testimony at all would be as unreasonable as not to believe, on the authority of the principle of identity, or the principle that the same is the same, that the three angles of a triangle are equal to two right angles. To believe human testimony is normal; and hence children always believe every one, and all that is told

them, till by experience they have learned to distrust. But in after life, however distrustful we may have been rendered by experience of the duplicity of men, we always believe every man's testimony when there are no considerations which impeach it or which tend to take away its credibility. We have and can have no positive reasons for believing, for, if we were to insist upon them, we could never believe any one man without an infinite series of vouchers for his veracity. Why we should believe a fellow-man we know not; but we know it is a principle of our nature to believe him, when we have nothing to object to his credibility. The verification of human testimony is only a negative process; and yet what is established on human testimony, against which no valid objection can be brought, is established, proved, in as high a sense as we ever prove any proposition whatever; and the certainty resting on it, and which is called *moral* certainty, is as high as *metaphysical* certainty. Consequently, when we have shown that in those matters which fall under human testimony, and those which are said to demand demonstrative proof, the mind according to its own principles or laws has nothing to object, and cannot object without contradicting those laws or principles, we have done all that is or can be understood by proving a proposition. The logical process we have pointed out does this in the case of the church, and therefore it *proves* it, and the human intellect cannot refuse to accept the church for what she professes to be, without doing violence to itself.

9. That we here clear up the whole mystery of the elicitation of an act of faith, we are far from pretending, if by clearing up is meant removing the remote as well as the proximate mystery. How the subject can be creditive, or how the object can be credible, what is the secret virtue of the believing faculty of the one and of the credibility of the other, we know not, save so far as we see the effects. But this is nothing to us in particular, for, if it is an objection, it is one which concerns others as well as ourselves, since an act of intuition or of discursion as well as of faith, an act of human faith as well as of divine faith, involves it. What constitutes the subject cognitive? what constitutes the object cognoscible? the subject able to know, and the object capable of being known? The question is old, and few who have entered somewhat into metaphysical studies can be wholly ignorant of the efforts which philosophers, ancient

and modern, have made, by investigation of the cognitive subject or the cognoscible object, to wring out the secret, and tell us, not that we know, but how we know. No one has pushed his researches further in this direction than Immanuel Kant in his *Critik der reinen Vernunft;* but he has ended where he began, simply telling us we know because—we do. All that any man by natural reason can say is, we know because Almighty God has made us intelligent beings, and placed us in relation with cognoscible objects, that we believe because he has made us creditive subjects, and placed us in relation with credible objects, and we should not be what we are, if we did or could not. In supernatural faith, we believe because we are made by the *donum* supernaturally creditive, and by the presence of the church are in relation with a supernaturally credible object. Here is all natural reason says or can say. That this leaves a mystery unexplained, we do not deny; there is mystery everywhere, could we but see far enough into things to detect it; but here is no special mystery, no peculiar mystery, only the one great mystery common to every act of human life, which lies at the bottom of all things, and which none but God alone can clear up. This is enough; for when we have reduced the special mystery in some particular case to the one general mystery which envelops all, we have done all that ever is or can be understood by clearing up or explaining it.

Yet somewhat further than this the Catholic believer may and does go. To the eye of natural reason, every act of human life, discursively considered, if you wish to go behind reason, involves a *vicious* circle, from which by way of conclusion from a given antecedent it is impossible to extricate ourselves; and were it not for the act of faith which we make immediately in our faculties, we never should get out of it, or perform a single human act. This act of faith, human faith we mean, including in one simple indecomposable act both antecedent and consequent, by a pure and bold affirmation, lifts us from the circle, and life proceeds. Here is the fact which has turned the heads of our transcendentalists, and which they have known so little how to use,—an immense fact, not always duly appreciated, but which no sound philosophy can neglect. Yet this act, this pure affirmation, man's first act and the most astonishing act of his whole life, has no logical validity, and, if we insist on concluding it from an antecedent, is logically impossible; for there is no conceivable antecedent from which it can be con-

cluded. Logically considered, it involves the precise absurdity our correspondent thinks he discovers in the act of divine faith. Hence, in the history of all ages, while the mass of men believe in their faculties, and live a practical life, the few who demand a reason for all they do, though practically believing with the multitude, yet in their speculations have an almost irresistible tendency to universal scepticism. They make, indeed, with the rest of us, their act of faith in reason, for this they cannot help doing; but speculatively this has in their eyes no validity, and they see not how universal doubt is to be escaped. Men recoil instinctively from the terrible conclusion that there is no certainty, that a man is not really certain that doubt is doubting, and in all ages there have been philosophers who have struggled manfully against it. Plato and Aristotle among the ancients, Descartes, Leibnitz, Malebranche, Kant, Reid and Stewart, Fichte, Schelling, Hegel, Cousin, among the moderns, have all tried to overcome speculative doubt, and legitimate this primitive act of faith; but we need hardly say that they have done so without the least conceivable success. M. Cousin has spoken as well on the subject as any philosopher, ancient or modern, with whom we are acquainted; yet he has done nothing but place the difficulty more prominently before our eyes. He thought he had found its solution in the distinction between spontaneity and reflection, the subjective reason and the objective reason. He supposed the act was by the spontaneous virtue of the objective and impersonal reason, which, as objective and impersonal, was independent of us, and logically antecedent to the primitive affirmation. But we have only our subjective reason as authority for the objective, and by our subjective reason only are we able to say there is an objective reason; which necessarily destroys the independence of the objective reason, and reduces its authority to that of the subjective and personal. This M. Cousin's bitter enemy, M. Pierre Leroux, the leader of the progressist or modified Saint-Simonian school, discovered, and he thought to escape the objection by seizing on the fact, that in every intellectual phenomenon there are subject and object, which, in our apprehension, are always *me* and *not me*. But nothing was gained; because there was nothing except our faculties to vouch for the fact that the *not me* was not *me*. Turn which way we will, by natural reason alone there is no escape, as she herself asserts; because it is demonstrably evident that we have

nothing but reason with which to verify reason, and in every effort to verify it we must begin by assuming it.

It is only in the Catholic faith that we are able to find the solution of this difficulty. In the *donum fidei*, which is a *supernaturally* infused power or virtue, we have, as it were, a supernatural reason, superior to natural reason, the antecedent from which it may be concluded, and its primitive act of faith legitimated. We receive the church on the authority of the *donum*, the supernatural gift, and therefore on an authority above and more ultimate than reason. The authority of the church, by virtue of this supernatural principle of assent, is really above and more ultimate than reason, and not, as those who are outside of the church commonly imagine, merely the authority of reason in a disguised form. This authority is, then, really authority for reason, and whatever it proposes is an antecedent from which reason may logically conclude, without any danger of concluding *idem per idem*. Now, the church teaches us that man was made after the image and similitude of his Maker, and that this image and similitude are in his rational nature. In his rational nature, man participates of the divine nature, and in that sense in which the essence of the divinity is to know, and to know without other medium than itself. Hence, it would be a contradiction in terms to suppose reason could not make the affirmation in question.

This solution is substantially the solution M. Cousin himself gives, but with this difference: he professes to obtain it from reason itself, from which it is not obtainable; whereas we obtain it by means of supernatural faith elicited by the *donum*, which makes all the difference in the world. If we ask him to verify his solution, he can answer only by a paralogism; but if he asks us to do it, we can answer by the supernatural authority of faith, logically antecedent to reason. Reason in its sphere is valid, because it is a participation of the divine nature, as the *donum fidei* is in the order of grace, and the *lumen gloriæ* in the beatified state; but reason herself cannot affirm that she is this participation, for she is too feeble a participation for that, and therefore cannot legitimate herself; and herein is it specifically distinguished from the *donum fidei* and the *lumen gloriæ*, each of which participates in a sufficient degree to affirm its own participation. Reason once known to be a participation of the divine nature is known to be valid in all its normal acts, because it is in some sense God himself who sees and af-

firms, so to speak, in its intuitions or affirmations. In believing it, *in its sphere, and in its normal exercise*, it is indeed God that we believe; for it is in him we live and move and are, and therefore that we see, and know, and affirm,—substantially the *vision in God* of Malebranche, a doctrine materially true; but formally false, when asserted, as he asserts it, on the authority of natural reason itself; for, as we have seen, it is not discoverable by natural reason, and can be known and established only by the authority of supernatural faith. This is not the only instance in which philosophers have stolen their solutions from faith, and sent them back to us as the property of natural reason itself.

But, admitting that by the *donum fidei* we legitimate the church by an authority antecedent to reason, and by the church we legitimate reason in showing that in its sphere and degree it is a participation of the divine nature, we are able, by means of the Catholic faith, to get out, not only of practical scepticism, but of speculative or philosophical scepticism also, and to establish human science on a solid and imperishable foundation. But it is only by the Catholic faith this can be done; for it cannot be done without a principle more than human, and that precise supernatural principle which we have in Catholicity. Hence, in a deeper and nobler sense than is commonly imagined, at least by those not Catholics, is revelation the only solid basis of philosophy,—not only because it furnishes *data* not furnished by natural reason, from which conclusions may be drawn throwing much light on natural phenomena, but because it enables us to verify reason itself, the instrument of philosophy, and without whose verification there can be no sound philosophy.

10. Some will, perhaps, object, since we deny the necessity of all investigation into the motives of credibility, in the case of actual believers, and of children validly baptized and properly instructed from the first, that we lay down the dangerous principle of believing without examining, and throw open the door to the reception of falsehood as well as of truth. The common notion among those outside of the church is, that no faith can be reasonable which has not been preceded by examination of its motives, and in their case this may be true; because there are obstacles in their way, and they cannot, or will not, believe till they are removed. To them, therefore, we say always, examine patiently, thoroughly, in a meek and humble and prayerful spirit, and you

will believe; and we should not feel authorized in calling upon them to believe, if we had not sufficient reasons, which we can offer them, to remove every objection which reason can suggest against believing. But this is an exception to the general rule, rendered necessary in their case, because they are out of the normal order. To others we do not say, examine and then believe; for they already have all that examination can give them. The normal order of life is to begin by believing, not by reasoning; for, till we believe, we have nothing to reason from. To begin in the order of grace by believing is not anomalous, irregular, but conformable to the general law of all life, and therefore cannot be reasonably objected to.

As to the dangerousness of the principle, it is purely imaginary. The *donum fidei* is not a general *vis creditiva*, but simply *vis creditiva* in relation to its special correlative, the supernatural credible object. Its special correlative is God supernaturally revealing himself. As it is a supernatural gift for the express purpose of enabling us to believe this supernatural object, it would be a contradiction in terms to suppose it a power to believe any thing else, and impious to suppose it could be the power to believe any object not strictly and absolutely true. It is not the power to believe where there is no credible object, and where the truth is not there is for it no credible object, and there no faith is or can be elicited. In a word, the creditive subject, made creditive subject by the special infused grace or participation of Almighty God, can elicit no act of faith without a credible object; and no object, not strictly true, can be, in relation to it, credible object, unless we deny the veracity of God, and allege that he can deceive or be deceived; for in the *donum* it is by him, and only by him, that we believe, and it is, in some sense, he that believes in us.

Moreover, all faith is belief on authority, and the authority itself is the primary object of the faith; that which it proposes is only the secondary object, believed inasmuch as we believe the authority proposing. To the elicitation of an act of divine or supernatural faith, not only the supernatural elevation of the subject, by the infused habit or virtue of faith, is necessary, but also the *supernatural authority* proposing itself, and what is to be believed on it as the credible object. This authority must be that of God himself; for, in the act of divine faith, it is not only by him that we believe, but he himself whom we believe. Then, unless God, who

is truth itself, and infinitely *verax*, can propose and believe falsehood, it is utterly impossible to elicit the act of faith, save on condition of a credible object strictly and absolutely true.

This meets, in advance, the objection which might at first sight seem to arise in the case of children of heretics and schismatics. If these children are validly baptized, as they may be, what is to hinder them from believing the doctrines of the sect in which they are born, as readily and as firmly as the children of Catholics do the doctrines of the church? These children, if validly baptized, receive the *donum* or virtue of faith, which is all they need or can have before coming to years of discretion; and if they die in infancy, they will undoubtedly be saved. If, when they come to years of discretion, they obstruct it by no mortal sin, it is in them a power to elicit the act of faith, if the credible object be present, and they will infallibly elicit it. But in the bosom of the sects the credible object is not present, but is wanting, in most cases, even in its secondary sense, in all in its primary sense, namely, the authority proposing itself, and without whose proposition what is to be believed on it, as the dogmas or several articles of faith, is not believable. This authority none of the sects, even by their own confession, have; they deny all such authority, and make it a capital sin in us that we allege that there is such authority, and that we have it in our church. Not having this authority, they have not the credible object; and therefore, even if they have the *donum*, they have not the essential conditions of eliciting an act of faith. Therefore it is impossible, in the bosom of any of the sects, to make an act of faith, as we have heretofore, on several occasions, proved.

We do not disguise from ourselves that this conclusion may seem harsh and illiberal to our sectarian friends; and if it rested on our authority alone, we should not dare utter it. But it is not we who say so, but the truth itself; and we should be wanting in that charity which loves our neighbour as ourselves, if we sought to conceal or to soften it. It is no charity to those who are in error to be left to think their condition is not perilous. We may be as liberal as we will in what is our own, but there is no place for our liberality in that which is not ours, but God's. It is not we, but he, who makes the conditions of salvation, and such conditions as seem to him good; and it is fair to presume that we could make no better ones, were the matter left to us. Our

business, and that of every rational being, is to find out the conditions of salvation actually established in the divine order, and to conform to them, without disturbing ourselves with the question, whether they are liberal or illiberal, pleasing to the unbeliever or displeasing. The Almighty is not very likely to do wrong, or to exact what he does not impart the ability to give. That sectarians do not and cannot elicit an act of faith is no more than they themselves know, or are morally bound to know. Our young friend, himself a minister, and occupying one of our old Puritan pulpits, not only begins by a virtual confession of his want of faith, but writes his whole letter to prove that an act of faith, properly so called, is utterly impossible. Chillingworth, decidedly the ablest champion the Protestant cause has ever counted, confesses that divine faith is not possible on Protestant principles, and boldly contends that God does not demand it. Doubtless, sectarians may generally *think* they have all the faith that it is possible for us human beings to have, but they know that what they have is not properly faith; for they cannot be ignorant that faith, to be faith, must exclude doubt, and—unless the power of believing is obstructed by sin—even the possibility of doubt. The best among them, those the most firmly persuaded of their orthodoxy, know nothing of the calm, tranquil faith of the Catholic believer,—have no absolute certainty, such certainty as would make them feel it absurd, even by way of hypothesis, to suppose their sect may possibly err; for every one confesses his sect is fallible, and denies that there is any infallible church. They may think they are as certain as others are, as certain as they can be; but surely they are not so certain but they would gladly be more certain. If they could have a higher certainty, how thankfully would they receive it, and from how much secret misgiving would it relieve them! "We *think* we are right; we *think* we cannot be deceived; we hope we are not; we pray that we may not be; we close our eyes and ears to whatever would suggest that we are; yet we do not know; it is possible we are mistaken; we are all liable to err; we try to be right, and we trust a merciful God will pardon us, if we are not." This is the most that we have ever known sectarians able to say; and if sometimes they attempt to say more, it is, if they are not evidently laboring under some hallucination, because they are conscious that more is requisite to come up to the standard of faith. Now, in all this there is no

faith, not the most distant approach to faith. Sectarians are, then, not only without faith, but, unless altogether more stupid than we believe them, they know they have no faith; at least, the doubt and mistrust they experience indicate a sufficient knowledge of their want of faith to render them culpable, if they do not to the utmost of their ability inquire if a certain faith be not possible,—a faith so certain that they can conceive nothing more certain, and in which they can affirm the credible object as certainly as they can now their own existence, and more certainly than the mathematician, with natural reason alone, can that the three angles of a triangle are equal to two right angles. In every land, the church is at their door, assuring them such a faith as this is possible, and the indispensable condition of salvation. Do they examine to see if what she says is true? Not at all. They will not seek, therefore they do not find; and whose the fault? It is not ours to say; but we leave it to them to decide, if, when they come to the judgment bar of God, it turns out, as it will, that the church is right, what valid plea they will have for not having been true, devout Catholics. There stands the church, or there stands Christ in the church, knocking at the door of their hearts, his locks wet with the dew of the night, entreating them to arise and let him enter. What excuse have they for bidding him begone and not trouble their rest? It is for them, and not for us, to answer. All we say is, "faith comes by hearing," and "without faith it is impossible to please God."

11. When we have established the church to the human intellect, by removing the intellectual obstacles to its reception, we have the right in all subsequent controversies to appeal to it, as authority which even they who do not as yet receive it by divine faith are bound, by the laws of their own reason, to acknowledge and submit to. On its authority we then tell them, and they cannot object, since by the very supposition no valid objection can be brought, that they are bound to elicit the act of divine faith, and that if they do not, whoever or wherever they are, it is their own fault; for, on the same unobjectionable authority, we tell them again that there is a preparatory grace given unto all men, which, if not resisted,—and which need not be resisted, for the act of resistance is a free, voluntary act on the part of him who resists,—will be immediately efficacious in disposing them to believe, and conducting them

to the holy sacrament of Baptism, in which they will infallibly receive the *donum fidei*, and become able to elicit the faith required. Thus to believe is always in their power, if they will to believe. If they resist the grace of God, if they remain unbelievers, if they persist in opposing the word, however honest and sincere they may fancy themselves, we tell them, on the authority which their own reason declares to be paramount to all others, that they are in fault, are guilty before God, and have no right to expect any thing but everlasting condemnation. "He that believeth not shall be condemned." Here we obtain a motive that may operate on the will, and induce it not to resist divine grace, but to suffer it to be efficacious in preparing and finally completing the conversion. Hence the importance, in conjunction with divine grace, of the logical process.

VI. We have now answered the principal objections urged by the letter before us. We have endeavoured to make the answer conclusive, and, at the same time, as simple and popular in its form as the nature of the subject allowed. The reply is long, but it is well known that an objection may be stated in a single line, which will require a volume to refute. If we had been called upon to answer only for philosophers and theologians, we could have answered in much briefer space, and with far greater ease to ourselves; but all readers are not philosophers or theologians, and it requires not seldom less labor to prepare the answer than it does the majority of readers to receive it. We have aimed to adapt our remarks to the understanding of men of strong and clear minds of all classes and pursuits, and hope we have escaped the fault of being too popular for the professional and too scholastic for the general reader. A few additional remarks, in reply to certain miscellaneous objections presented in the letter, and we close this already too protracted discussion.

1. Our correspondent tells us, that there are only two methods by which the claims of the church can be established: the one, arguing from principles common to both parties; and the other, the historical method. The first he condemns as proving nothing, inasmuch as it assumes, but does not prove, the principles. Will he tell us how it is possible for two parties mutually opposed to argue together, if not from principles common to them both, and therefore from that on which they are not opposed, but agreed? He decides in favor of the historical method; but this, so far

as it involves argument at all, involves arguments from principles common to both parties. Nothing can be concluded from history by either party for itself or against the other, save so far as both agree on the facts of history; and these facts, when agreed on, become principles common to both parties, from which conclusions may be drawn. One method, in fact, no more proves its principles than the other; for reasoning never proves its principles, but must always proceed from premises *given*, not obtained.

We grant the question of the church is simply an historical question; yet a question not of all history, but of certain definite facts. The writer of the letter is mistaken in supposing it involves a thorough investigation of the manners, customs, laws, political, civil, and literary institutions and influences of past ages; for it would be impossible from these to conclude any thing for or against the divine origin and constitution of the church. He, in assuming this investigation to be necessary, assumes that we have in our natural reason a standard or measure of infallibility,—not merely of what is relatively infallible, infallible in relation to reason, and what pertains to its own legitimate province, —but of what is absolutely infallible; which we have not, and cannot have; for, if we had, we should know all that God knows, and be what the devil falsely told our first parents they would be, if they should eat of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Here is a fact which Protestants seldom appreciate. It was not appreciating this fact which led Professor Park to commit the blunders in his Lecture on *The Intellectual and Moral Influence of Romanism*, which we exposed in our *Review* for last October.* The Protestant forgets, that, if the church be true, be from God, her teaching must be his reason, the principle or standard by which he is to judge the influences of history, not these the standard by which he is to judge her teaching. He carries with him always the assumption of private reason as the ultimate authority on all questions which can come up,—not reflecting, that, if private reason be the ultimate authority, there can be no church authority. The church concluded by private reason, no matter from what *data*, would not be authoritative, for the authority would be that of private reason which concluded it; and in believing what it proposes we should not believe it, but private reason. The assumption of the authority of private

* See *Professor Park against Catholicity* in Volume VI.—Ed.

reason negatives in advance that of the church, and renders the proposed investigation ridiculous. It is, as we said in replying to Professor Park, a plain begging of the question, or the decision in advance against the church. Yet it is always after having assumed the ultimate authority of private reason, and after having thus decided against the church, that our Protestant logicians proceed to inquire if the church be or be not authoritative. And it is precisely this course our young friend unconsciously adopts in the historical investigation he proposes as necessary. Yet he prides himself on his reason, and laughs at Catholic logicians. A little reflection, one would think, would suffice to teach him his mistake, and to show him that it is very necessary to understand the precise question at issue, before proceeding to its solution. All that history can do, all that it is required to do in the case, is to establish two simple facts:—1. That our Lord did found a church with authority to teach; and 2. That the Roman Catholic Church is the one he founded. These two facts historically established, as we should establish any other historical facts, all is established, and reason has no further office but to apprehend and submit to what the church teaches. A very little study will enable our correspondent, with his present knowledge of history in general, to establish these; for they are established by plain and public facts, readily come at, and easily verified. The method he proposes involves the precise paralogism he began by objecting to, and, if pursued, would only bewilder him in a mass of details, from which he could derive no light on the real problem to be solved. We cannot, therefore, understand his incompetency to decide forthwith all there is for him to decide; and we by no means agree that it is necessary for him to delay his obedience to the commands of his God, till he has wasted the better part of his life in a useless investigation. We, of course, do not want him or any one to come blindly into the church; and we assure him he will find few priests ready to receive him, till he can give a reason for the faith he hopes to receive; but he has only to resolve to open his heart to the truth, to abate his confidence in his own infallibility, or power, by unassisted reason, to judge infallibly of revealed truth, and earnestly to pray God to incline his will to his holy word, and to open his understanding to its reception, and the doubt and darkness will flee away, the day-star will arise in his heart, he will experience the inef-

fable joy of believing, and like the blessed Apostle St. Thomas, but more blessed than he, exclaim, "My Lord and my God!"

2. Our correspondent mistakes the teachings of the Catholic Church, when he fancies she teaches that the "true condition of salvation is that each should act up to the measure of faith or of light he has." She teaches, and all her children are bound to believe, that out of the pale of her communion there is no salvation; for she teaches that "without faith it is impossible to please God;" and faith, we have proved, over and over again, in the sense she takes the word, is impossible without her. God does not command what is impossible; or, if he commands what is naturally impossible for men to do, he never commands it without bestowing the grace which renders it possible; and therefore, if they do not always and everywhere do what he commands, the fault is theirs, in resisting the grace given them, and which, if not resisted, would have been efficacious.

Our correspondent has been misled by what some of our theologians say concerning invincible ignorance, and which he totally misapprehends. That God will condemn no man for *invincible* ignorance is readily conceded; but whether there ever was or ever can be a case of real invincible ignorance, as to what the church teaches is necessary to be explicitly believed as the medium of salvation, may well be doubted, and is, from the nature of the case, unsusceptible of proof. All baptized children, by whomsoever baptized, are in the communion of the church, and, if dying in infancy, or before committing any mortal sin, will undoubtedly be saved; but the most liberal construction of invincible ignorance ever adopted by any Catholic theologian falls far short of the latitudinarian principle assumed. No one is ever admitted to be invincibly ignorant, who has had any possible means of knowing what the church requires him to believe as the medium of salvation; and no one, even if invincibly ignorant, can be saved, unless, when dying, he is free from mortal sin;—two things which can with difficulty, to say the least, be assumed of any adult person out of the church, especially of any Protestant. It is hard to conceive any Protestant who could not know what the church teaches, if he wished. His very Protestantism brings the church to his notice, and in its history and doctrines tells him so much of her, that he is inexcusable, if he do not go further, and ascertain what she is and what she requires.

If he does go further, and ascertains what she teaches, he is not in ignorance; and if he then does not believe her, he is a heretic; and heresy, the blessed apostle assures us, is a *deadly* sin. At any rate, whatever may be said in the case of some, the plea of invincible ignorance cannot avail our young friend. He is an educated man; has studied theology; and he professes to be a minister of the Gospel; he knows there is a church called the Catholic Church, and he has had ample means of knowing what she teaches. His position outside of her, then, if she be the true church, as she most assuredly is, must be not a little perilous, and altogether unjustifiable.

3. Our young Protestant minister says, it is "utterly wicked and absurd to denounce any penalty beforehand upon any result deliberately and candidly arrived at"; for there must be in "reasoning, between man and man, no threats introduced, or any extraneous element whatever, to influence the determination." In reasoning between man and man, we concede it; but this is not a question between man and man, but between man and his Maker; and the threats or consequences of believing or not believing are intrinsic, not extraneous, elements of the question to be decided. Between man and man, all reasoning, all faith even, is free, and no man has the right to call another to an account for his faith, whatever it may be; for we recognize no human authority in matters of faith. Before God, too, man is free to believe or not to believe, as it seems to him good; but not free to hope the same recompense whether he believes or disbelieves. Almighty God has promised eternal life to the believer, and threatened the unbeliever with eternal death. "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be condemned." St. Mark, xvi. 16. You can believe or not, as you choose. If you choose not to believe, eternal death will be your doom; if you choose to believe, you may aspire to eternal life. This is an integral part of that very word you are to believe or not believe, into the credibility or incredibility of which you are to inquire. Where is the wickedness in proposing such a word, or in us in telling you that God has revealed such a word, and in urging you to inquire if we are not right in telling you so? Here is no extraneous element introduced to influence the determination, for nothing is introduced not integral in the question itself. The indignation expressed, then, is misplaced.

Moreover, our correspondent proceeds on a supposition which we cannot grant him. He supposes that men may deliberately and candidly inquire into the authority of the church and come to different results, or that the authority of the church is a matter about which men may *honestly* differ in opinion. We do not concede this. Faith is not a matter of opinion; and there can be, after proper examination, no honest difference of opinion about it. The Almighty has not committed the indiscretion of making a revelation for us, and of leaving it so uncertain and doubtful, that men may honestly differ from one another as to what it is. Such indiscretion, or such want of foresight and proper adaptation of means to ends, we might look for in weak and imprudent men, but not in the all-wise and all-powerful God. He, if he has made a revelation at all, must have made it to be believed; and also have made the means of believing it so accessible, so certain and sure, that no one, with ordinary prudence, can honestly seek and not find. If you examine honestly, meekly, candidly, in an humble and reverential spirit, the only proper spirit in which to inquire at all, you will infallibly find that the Catholic Church is the living and authoritative church of God; for, if you so inquire, you will be submissive to the grace which is given you, and that will subdue your moral repugnance to the church, and open the eyes of your understanding to her claims. We tell you this, and you have no right to dispute us till you have so inquired, or till you bring us an instance of some one having so inquired, and failed. But if you inquire with a proud and contracted spirit, with haughty reliance on your own infallibility and self-sufficiency, resolutely resisting divine grace, you will not find, and will not deserve to find; for you will inquire amiss,—in a disposition, not to receive, but to reject the truth. And here is the reason why so many who think they are honest inquirers do not find. At bottom you will always find exorbitant pride, an overweening self-conceit, though, it may be, aping the form of humility. There is a want of perfect ingenuousness, of true earnestness, of a loving and reverential disposition. Then, again, thousands who say they inquire do not inquire. How many of those Protestants who condemn Catholicity in such unmeasured terms have ever sat one hour for instruction at the feet of those authorized to give it? He who would know the Catholic faith should always seek instruction from the living teacher authorized by the church to teach, and he will never have inquired properly till he has done so.

4. The writer of the letter professes himself to hold to the Catholic Church; so firmly rooted in all men is that article of the creed, "I believe in the holy Catholic Church," and so difficult is it for any one even to conceive the possibility of being a Christian without acknowledging the Catholic Church. The church hovers over them; and in their wildest extravagances some shadow of her majesty is always present to their hearts and imaginations,—a fact worth meditating long and well. The writer says, the "Catholic Church comprises all who share the faith and salvation of Jesus Christ." Another precious admission, which involves the whole doctrine of exclusive salvation; for if the church comprises all who share that faith and salvation, then none whom the church does not comprise do or can share the faith and salvation of Jesus Christ,—and what more do we say, when we say faith and salvation are not possible out of the communion of the Catholic Church?

But who are these who share the faith and salvation of Jesus Christ? The members of the Catholic Church. Agreed. Are they members because they share the faith and salvation, or do they share the faith and salvation because members? If you say the latter, you must determine the church, and become a member of it, before you can share the faith and salvation, or be truly a Christian; which is the Catholic doctrine. Then what, where, or which is the Catholic Church, or church of which you must be a member in order to share the faith and salvation of Jesus Christ? Here is a very significant question, and which must be answered first of all. If you say the former, that you are members because you share the faith and salvation, which is what we suppose you would say, then you must hold that you get the faith and salvation without the church. Now, how without the church do you contrive to get the faith and salvation? How do you determine what they are? How do you determine what are the means of eliciting the faith and securing the salvation? These, you will perceive, are for you, as well as for us, fundamental questions, and must be answered in some way. How do you answer them? and how establish the soundness and sufficiency of your answer? Here is a difficulty which you must not evade, but one which you must meet at the very threshold.

You may answer us, as your liberal Christian friends in general do, that Christianity is a life,—the life of Christ; and

that he who truly lives this life has all that is or can be required of him. Agreed, again. We say Christianity is a life,—the life of Christ,—and that all who truly live it have all that they need, either for this world or for that which is to come. But can this life be begotten and lived out of the communion of the Catholic Church? Here is the question. You assume it can, and that you or some of you live it, and by virtue of the fact of living it are brought into the church. This is a very pretty theory, but will you just favor us with its proofs? You demand of us proofs; do not take it unkindly, then, if we demand proofs of you. We suspect, however, that this is a point on which you do not happen to have any proofs to adduce. You make an assumption, which is demanded by the exigencies of your condition, we admit, but for which you have not the shadow of any authority. You reason in this way: "We who are out of the church do or may live the true life, and therefore we do or may live the true life out of the church; and by living it out of the church, come, *ipso facto*, into the church." This is liberal Christian logic, and yet it is the best you have. We utterly deny your assumption. None of you who are outside of the Roman Catholic Church do live, approach, or even truly conceive the Christian life. The Christian life is not in the natural order; it is the supernatural life of justice, which places him who lives it on the plane of a supernatural destiny; and it is not and cannot be lived without supernatural faith,—"the just shall live by faith,"—and supernatural faith is not possible without the church. Faith is not, as our liberalist divines hold, something *in addition* to the Christian life, but that in which the Christian life begins, and without which it cannot be. We have seen that the proper natural human life begins and must begin in an act of faith, in a pure simple affirmation; so in the order of grace, or the supernatural order, the proper Christian life can begin only by a primitive act of supernatural faith, a pure affirmation, which affirms in one and the same act both the antecedent and consequent. For—remark well—the Christian life is not a *continuation and development of our natural human life*, but a new life, which for the individual begins absolutely *de novo*, and therefore demands necessarily "a new birth," properly a *birth;* and therefore all the necessary conditions of birth in general, inconceivable in the special case of the Christian birth without the church, the immaculate bride of the Lamb, the joyful *Mother* of all the faithful.

Nothing is more absurd than to make the children anterior to the mother, and to assume that the spiritual children procreate their own spiritual mother, as is assumed when it is assumed the Christian life may be begotten and lived without the church, and that the church is simply the offspring of those in whom it is so begotten, and who so live it. This reverses the whole order of both nature and grace. We cannot, then, accept *your* Catholic Church, nor concede that you, in the remotest degree, while out of the Roman Catholic Church, live the Christian life, or share the faith and salvation of Jesus Christ. We concede you many amiable qualities, many natural virtues, which in their place are respectable; we grant that many of you do all that can be really expected of simple human nature, wounded as it has been by the Fall; we even concede you all the real worth of character you claim for yourselves; but we see in it no approach to the Christian life; and it is because you cannot be born again and live the Christian life out of the church that you are so earnestly entreated to come into her communion. It is not that we underrate your virtues, but that you underrate the Christian life, when you imagine that you are or can be living it.

Our correspondent thinks that the epithet "*Roman*" applied to the church neutralizes the epithet *Catholic*. We think differently. Unity is essential to catholicity; for that thing which you call catholic must be one, or it cannot be catholic or universal, but will be multiple, and therefore particular. The unity must be predicable in the same order, too, as the catholicity or universality. If you assume a church, catholic in the visible order, as you do when you speak of it as extended or capable of extension in space, you must predicate unity of it in the same order, or what you term catholic will not be catholic, but a collection or aggregate of particulars. We commend this fact to the learned and metaphysical *New York Churchman*, and to our "Reformed Catholics" of the Anglican and Protestant Episcopal sect generally, who pronounce the word *catholic* with so much emphasis, and who would fain persuade us that they are so innocent as really to believe that the world will recognize the *Catholic* Church in an aggregation of particular communions, each distinct and independent of the other, and bound together by no visible bond of unity. If your unity is invisible, your catholicity must also be invisible, and to assert a visible catholic church with no

visible unity is nothing more nor less than a simple contradiction in terms. These "*Reformed* Catholics," who would be much more effectually reformed if at once *reformed* by the grace of God into what they call *Romanists*, must not laugh at our young friend for his notion of a catholic church, made up of isolated individuals, dispersed over the globe, and bound together by no bond of unity, visible or invisible; for they adopt precisely his doctrine, only they take particular communions for their units, and he simply individuals.

The proper name of the church is "The Holy Catholic Apostolic Church," and the epithet *Roman* is added, not to restrict the meaning of *Catholic*, but simply to mark the visible centre of unity; and since it undeniably must have such a centre of unity somewhere, or not be catholic or universal, it is obvious that the epithet *Roman*, so far from neutralizing the meaning of the word *Catholic*, serves to confirm it, and to make the universality or catholicity of the church more striking and unmistakable. It defines at once to you the Catholic Church by directing you to its centre of unity. One is struck at times with the slender stock in trade of critical and philosophical knowledge on which our Protestant friends attempt to do business. A little reflection, a little sober thought, would save them from many laughable blunders, as well as from the incivility of applying nicknames, and calling us *Romanists*, a term exceedingly ill adapted to designate our faith or character. Nevertheless the blunders and incivility are theirs, not ours.

5. "The Roman hierarchy, not the faith of Romanists [Catholics], is what I am steadily opposed to," says our estimable young preacher. What would he think of the play of Hamlet with the part of the Prince of Denmark left out by particular request? Not much, we apprehend, of the play itself, and still less of those by whose particular request the part was left out. Very much in the same light as this would strike him does his declaration strike us. "The Holy Catholic Church" is an article of faith in the Catholic's creed, and the hierarchy is not, in his faith, an excrescence of the church, nor a mere accidental appendage to it, but essential to its very being as the church. The Catholic faith teaches that the hierarchy of bishops, or pastors and teachers, under their chief, the successor of St. Peter, is of divine institution, and no Catholic can oppose it without opposing his whole faith. The authority

on which that rests is the authority on which his whole creed rests, and, if he should admit it to be insufficient for the hierarchy, he would admit it to be insufficient for the other articles of his creed, and then he would have no faith left. No man, then, can oppose the Catholic hierarchy without opposing directly the whole Catholic faith. Alas! man is a poor church builder, a miserable church reformer. There stands the Catholic Church, as she has stood for these eighteen hundred years, and as she will stand unto the consummation of the world. Either she is the church of God, or she is not. If she is not, away with her; we have nothing to do with her, and want nothing which is hers. If she is, as she is as certainly as God exists, then you must take her as she is, as a whole; you have no questions to ask, no suggestions to make, no improvements to recommend. Your sole business is to bow down your reason and will to her, as the visible representative of Almighty God, and to believe and do simply what she commands you. If she does not please you, if she does not suit your taste or judgment, it does not follow that she is in fault. The Almighty was not bound to take you or me into his councils, and it is not likely that it would have been of any great advantage to him, if he had actually consulted us. Men are a little too ready to counsel the All-wise, and to inform him how he ought or ought not to do. It is but becoming modesty to presume that he knew as well as we how to constitute his church, and that it is for us to seek to conform ourselves to her, and not for her to seek to conform herself to us. The objection is a silly one, if the church be not of God; it deserves a harsher name, if she be of God.

In conclusion, we assure our young friend that we duly appreciate his liberality in not *blaming* us for becoming a Catholic, and intimating that he can still respect us. We honor his liberality as it deserves. But, after all, the question is not one of human praise or blame, of human respect or disrespect. Human respect, however pleasant it may be, is of no great value, and should never be suffered to weigh in the balance with the love and approbation of Almighty God. If we have his consent or approbation for what we do, it matters little what men may think or say of us. It is not what we think of our young friend's liberalism, or he of our Catholicity, that is to decide the character and value of either. The Catholic is not likely to feel that he is the party

which stands most in need of commiseration, or that he calls for any remarkable stretch of liberality. His great difficulty is in being sufficiently grateful to his divine Master for making him a Catholic, when so many others, no worse by nature, are left to perish in their error. If he obeys his church, he knows he is well enough off; that he has a hundred-fold here, and the promise of the life to come.

Our young Protestant friend may think lightly of all this now; for he is fresh from the schools, in the heyday of life, with his spirits elastic, and his prospects radiant. Youth, health, talents, learning, eloquence, troops of affectionate and applauding friends,—how can he look upon life as he will one day when these disappear or lose their value in his estimation, and, with his ideals all unrealized, he is obliged to look round for something solid and permanent on which he may rest, some safe shelter from the storms and tempests of life? "Beatus qui intelligit quid sit amare Jesum, et contemnere seipsum propter Jesum. Oportet dilectum pro dilecto relinquere, quia Jesus vult solus super omnia amari. Dilectio creaturæ fallax et instabilis. Dilectio Jesu fidelis et perseverabilis. Qui adhæret creaturæ, cadet cum labili. Qui amplectitur Jesum, firmabitur in ævum. Illum dilige, et amicum tibi retine, qui, omnibus recedentibus, te non relinquet, nec patietur in fine perire. Ab omnibus oportet te aliquando separari, sive velis, sive nolis. Teneas te apud Jesum, vivens ac moriens; et illius fidelitati committe, qui, omnibus deficientibus, solus potest juvare."* We know the writer well. We know God has once spoken by his grace to his heart, and called his attention to the church, and, as secure as he may now feel, as secure as all his education has tended to make him feel, the great question, What shall I do to be saved? will one day press upon his heart, and demand an answer. The answer with which he now amuses himself and his people will then appear to him a bitter mockery, a sort of Mephistopheles laugh over the deep agony of the once innocent, now guilty, Margaret. When that question comes up, may the good God grant him to be true to the promptings and inspirations of divine grace!

We have concluded our reply. We have answered our young friend at full length. We have not spared his reasonings, but we trust we have said nothing to wound his sensibilities, or to indicate any want of that esteem for him we

*De Imitatione Christi, Lib. II., Cap. 7.

began by expressing. We beg him to read and *study* what we have replied, for it concerns the most momentous question that can possibly occupy the thoughts of man. If what we have said fail to satisfy him, we shall be happy to receive his objections, and pledge ourselves, in advance, to remove, as far as a complete logical reply can remove any objections, whatever objections he can urge, without denying that very reason on the authority of which he objects. All we ask is, that he do not repeat his old objections, without undertaking to show that our replies are not to the point, are unsound in principle, or not sustained by the facts in the case.

THE GREAT QUESTION.*

[From Brownson's Quarterly Review for October, 1847.]

Mr. Penny is a convert from Anglicanism, and a young man of great worth and promise. The little work he has given us here was for the most part written while he was passing into the church, and retains some traces of his transition state; but it indicates learning, ability, and a turn for scholastic theology not common in Oxford students. It is written in a free, pure, earnest spirit, mild but firm, and, though not always exact in thought or expression, is a very valuable controversial tract, and may, with slight reservations, be cheerfully recommended to all who are willing to seek for the truth, and to embrace it when they find it.

The recent converts from the Anglican Establishment are making large contributions to our English Catholic literature. We give their productions a cordial welcome, for, though they are in some respects immature, and not always critically exact, they breathe a free and earnest spirit, and are marked by a docile disposition, and a deep and tender piety. Nevertheless, the greater part of them are, perhaps, too local and temporary in their character to be of any general or permanent utility. They are almost exclusively confined to the controversy between their authors and their

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* *The Exercise of Faith impossible except in the Catholic Church.* By W. G. Penny, late Student of Christ Church, Oxford. Philadelphia: 1847.

former high-church associates. Where that controversy is the only or principal one remaining between Catholics and Protestants, they are no doubt not only valuable, but all we could desire. Yet, after all, that controversy is not the important one; it affects, in reality, only a small portion of the English people, and the works specially adapted to it are far from meeting the wants of the great body of English Evangelicals and Dissenters. Still less do they meet the wants of the various sects in our own country. The great body even of Episcopalians here are low-church, and as far from conceding the premises from which the Oxford converts reason as they are from accepting their conclusions.

Protestant Episcopalians, whether high-church or low-church, though respectable for their social standing, do not constitute with us a leading sect. We are pleased, rather than otherwise, to see the tendency of a very considerable number of persons to unite themselves with them, because we cannot doubt, that, if the American people go far enough from their present position to become Episcopalians, they will soon go further, and attain to the reality of which Episcopalianism is only a faint and mutilated shadow. But the sect has no firm hold on the American mind and heart, and does and can exert no commanding influence. It is an exotic, and no labor or pains can naturalize it. The grand current of American life and nationality flows on, saving a few ripples on the surface, undisturbed by its presence or its absence. Except, perhaps, in here and there a particular locality, it is Anglican rather than American, and is patronized chiefly, if not exclusively, by those who are affected by English rather than American tendencies,—as a fashionable religion, which serves to distinguish its professors from the vulgar. Works, therefore, which seek primarily its refutation, and confine themselves to the points specially in debate between it and us, however useful they may be to a few individuals, can make no deep impression on the national mind, and will contribute very little towards the conversion of the country. The Catholic makes no secret of his earnest wish to convert the country. He of course is not contented to reside here simply as one of a number of sects extending a certain degree of religious fellowship one to another, and asking only not to have his property confiscated or his throat cut. He would not only be Catholic himself, but he would extend the unspeakable benefits of his holy religion to all, and, by all the *Christian* means in his power, he must seek

to convert the whole population to Catholicity. He would be wanting in the blessed charity of the Gospel, if he aimed at any thing less. But in order to effect this glorious result, he must strive to reach the heart of the peculiarly American people, through which flows the mighty current of the peculiarly national life; he must labor to make an impression on that portion of the American population which is in an especial sense the repository of peculiarly American thought, principles, passions, affections, traditions, and tendencies,—the indigenous portion, the least affected by foreign culture and influences; and it is only in proportion as he reaches and gains the attention of these, that he can flatter himself that he is advancing in the work of converting the country.

These are not Episcopalians, nor distinguished individuals, whatever the sect to which they may appertain. The conversion of a very considerable number of distinguished individuals may take place with scarcely a perceptible effect on the great body of the American people; because these individuals do not represent the general thought and tendency of the country; because their example has little weight with the people at large; and because they are, for the most part, under foreign rather than native influences. The peculiarly American people are democratic, and generally distrust whatever rises above the common level. Distinguished individuals count for less here than in any other country of the globe. With us the individual loses himself in the crowd, and leads the crowd only by sharing their passions and consenting to be their organ. It is, therefore, on the crowd that we must operate, if we would effect any thing. The multitude govern, and it is their views and feelings, their tastes and tendencies, that decide the fate or determine the character of the country. These are now all either not for us or strongly against us; and our great and pressing work is to turn them into the Catholic channel. Hence, the important thing for us to study and address is the views and feelings, tastes and tendencies, not of distinguished individuals who may seem to be leaders, but of the great body of the common people. When we hear of the conversion of a distinguished individual, we rejoice for his sake, for he has a soul to save, and his conversion places him in the way of salvation; but when we hear of the conversion of large numbers from the middle and lower classes, we give thanks and rejoice for our country's sake, for we see in it a token that God himself is at work in the heart of the people, and preparing

the conversion of the nation itself,—that our holy religion is penetrating the living mass of American society, and subjecting it to the truth, beauty, and sanctity of the Gospel. We hope even the conversion of England, not so much from the large numbers of individuals eminent for their rank, talents, and acquirements, who have recently been converted, as from the hundreds of undistinguished individuals who have been gathered in, and whose names have not been gazetted. If we may say this of England, where distinguished individuals still count for something, much more may we say it of our own beloved country. When and where the people yield readily to the influence and example of their social chiefs, true wisdom may be to penetrate first of all into the palace and the castle, and labor to convert royalty and nobility ; but by no means can it be here in this country, where princes and nobles are at a discount, and the chiefs of the people are their chiefs only by being their slaves, consulting and exaggerating their tendencies. The controlling influences of modern society are in the lower instead of the higher ranks,—perhaps, in a religious point of view, with few exceptions, it has always been so. In seeking to restore an unbelieving or heretical country to the faith or the unity of the church, if we may rely on the lessons of history, the true policy in general, and especially now and here, is to begin at the base of society, and seek first to convert the common people.

Believing therefore, as we do, that the church has been divinely commissioned to teach all nations, and wishing, as we are bound in charity to wish, to add this nation as another rich gem to her crown, it becomes our duty to study and ascertain the religious state and tendencies of the great body of the American people, properly so called. This may be a difficult and even a delicate task. It is not every one who can comprehend his own age and country, and there are not many who can do it at all, unless they have shared their passions, unless their own hearts have beaten in unison with theirs, and they have been raised by divine grace above them to a position from which they can overlook the *mêlée*, and calmly survey all the movements and evolutions going on below. The Catholic who has lived apart and studied only works written for other times and countries, as well as the Protestant whose vision has all his life-time been contracted to his own petty sect, is very likely to mistake the true object of vision, or to see it only through a disturbing medium.

Catholicity is immovable and inflexible, one and the same always and everywhere; for the truth never varies. He who knows it in one age or country knows it in all. But with the sects it is far otherwise. They must needs obey the natural laws of development, strengthened and intensified by demoniacal influence. Their spirit and tendency, indeed, are always and everywhere the same, but their forms change under the very eye of the spectator, and are rarely the same for any two successive moments. Strike where Protestantism is, and it is not there. It is in perpetual motion, and exemplifies, so far as itself is concerned, the old heathen doctrine that all things are in a perpetual flux. You can never count on its remaining stationary long enough for you to bring your piece to a rest and take deliberate aim. You must shoot it on the wing; and if you are not marksman enough to hit it flying, you will have, however well charged and well aimed your shot, only your labor for your pains. It is never enough to take note either of its past or its present position; but we must always regard the direction in which it is moving, and the celerity with which it moves; and if we wish our shot to tell, we must aim, not at the point where it was, or where it now is, but at the point where it will be when a ball now fired may reach it. To ascertain this point requires either long practice or exact science. Yet it is less difficult than it may seem at first sight. We as Catholics, know perfectly well that the point to which all the sects are moving, with greater or less celerity, is the denial of God in the order of grace, and therefore of all supernatural revelation and religion. To this tends the inevitable and necessary development of Protestantism. This development may be hastened or retarded by circumstances, but it must sooner or later reach this fatal termination, if suffered to follow its natural course. There is an invincible logic in the human race, which pushes them on to the last consequences of their premises; and when, as in the Protestant rebellion, they have adopted premises which involve as their last consequence the rejection of the order of grace, and the assertion, if the word may be permitted us, of mere *naturism*, they will inevitably draw that consequence, and become theoretical and practical unbelievers, unless previously induced to change their premises.

The early Catholic controversialists clearly foresaw and distinctly announced that the Protestant premises involved

the rejection of all revealed religion, and in every age since our divines have continued to reassert the same; but, unhappily, in no age or country has this been enough to arrest the mad career of the Protestant people; for in no age or country has it ever been true that the mass of them would not continue the development of their principles, at the risk of running into no-religion, sooner than return to the church. The illustrious Bossuet, in the latter part of the seventeenth century, proved to the Protestants of his time, beyond the possibility of a rational doubt, that, if they continued their course, they must run into Socinianism,—a polite name for incredulity; but this did not arrest them; and not many years elapsed before they became, to an alarming extent, avowed Socinians, and even avowed infidels. To a Catholic, a doctrine or principle is refuted, proved to be false, when it is shown to have an infidel or a Socinian tendency; but not to a Protestant. Convince him that his principle has such a tendency, and he will become a Socinian or an infidel sooner than abandon it. The only effectual way of arresting Protestants is, not merely to show them whither they are tending, but to refute that to which they tend. They have an instinctive sense even now of what it is they tend to, but, unhappily, they do not, or will not, see, that, when they have reached it, they will not have whereon to rest the sole of their foot.

Foreseeing the inevitable tendency of Protestantism may indeed produce, and unquestionably has produced, a reaction in favor of the church in the minds of many excellent individuals at home and abroad; but the great majority of the people in all Protestant countries are far from recoiling, and are steadily moving onwards to the rejection of all supernatural religion. They reject the church as a positive institution, Jesus Christ as the consubstantial Son of the Father, the Holy Scriptures as the inspired word of God, and place them in the category of mere human books, and class the Lord that bought us with Zoroaster, Socrates, Apollonius of Tyana, Mahomet, Wesley, and Swedenborg. Especially is this true in this country, where all the sects are left free to run their natural course. The mass are borne onward with resistless force towards the goal, and it is useless to expect a reaction by merely showing the infidel results towards which they are borne;—far more useless to flatter ourselves that any general reaction has commenced. In spite of a few appearances on the surface, the deep

undercurrent is flowing on in the same direction it has been for the last three hundred years.

We shall deceive ourselves, if we suppose the question to-day is only between us and the Oxford party in the Anglican establishment, or between Catholicity and any form of dogmatic Protestantism. Protestantism, as including some elements of revealed truth from which we may reason in favor of the church, is virtually defunct, and to argue against it is as idle as to belabor a dead ass. The real obstacle which we have to surmount is Protestant only inasmuch as it is the natural development of Protestantism. It is not seldom that we meet men and women who expressly avow, that, if they could be Christians, they would be Catholics, that in their view Christianity and Catholicity are identical, and that, if we will convince them of the inspiration of the Scriptures, they will feel bound to accept and obey the church. Such persons as these—dispute it who may—are the real representatives of the age and country, the earnest of what the mass of the people are to be to-morrow. They are the only really significant class out of the church. The ministers and elders and their adherents around the defunct body of dogmatic Protestantism, trying, on the one hand, to galvanize it into life, and, on the other, to persuade the uneasy multitude that it is not dead, but only taking its after-dinner *siesta*, are not worth taking into the account. They neither represent the present, nor announce the future. They belong to the generation that was. The empire of the world out of the church has dropped from their hands, and however numerous they may be, and however powerful they may appear to the superficial glance, they are only relics of a past which can never return. Leave them to bury their dead.

The only portion of the Protestant world worth studying is the progressive portion, who continue and carry on the Protestant movement. These impersonate the age and country. What Strauss or Parker writes is far more important and instructive to Catholics than what Hengstenberg, Beecher, Spring, or Woods may write. The spirit and tendency of the age and country are better learned from *The Boston Quarterly Review*, *The Dial*, *The Herald of Truth*, *The Harbinger*, *The New York Tribune*, than from *The New-Englander*, *The Princeton Review*, *The True* [Protestant] *Catholic*, *The Churchman*. *The Courier and Enquirer*.

The progressive minority are the only significant portion, because the only living portion, of the Protestant world, and because they are to be the majority to-morrow. They live the real Protestant life, if life that may be called which is not life, but death, and are in the minority to-day only because they are alone faithful to the principles common alike to them and the majority. Wherever the people are withrawn from the law of grace, and abandoned to natural development, the progressive minority is the only portion worth studying, and the only portion against which it is necessary to direct our attacks.

All who know any thing of Protestantism know full well that it subsists, and can subsist, only so long as it has free scope to develop itself. It retains its adherents never by what it gives them, but always by what it is *just a-going* to give them. Few, if any, of them are perfectly satisfied with it as it is; and they cling to it only because they are in hopes further developments and modifications may make it precisely the thing they need and crave. Our course, then, is to head it in the direction in which it is moving, and must move if it move at all, cut off its opportunity for further development, compel it to come to a stand-still by showing that it is tending nowhither, and that further progress carries it off into the dark and inane. When we have shown that what it is developing itself into is mere space and vacuity, and have thus compelled it to remain motionless, it soon begins to putrefy, to send forth its stench, and all who value their health or their nostrils hasten to bury it from their sight, and to leave it to return to the elements from which it was taken.

That Protestantism in most countries, especially in this country, is developing into infidelity, irreligion, *naturism*, rejecting and losing even all reminiscences of the order of grace, is too obvious and too well known to be denied, or to demand any proof. It is stated in a recent number of the *American Almanac*, that over one half of the adult population of the United States make no profession of religion, are connected with no real or pretended church, and therefore belong at best to the class expressively denominated *Nothingarians*. The majority, then, it is fair to presume, either believe that they have no souls, or that their souls are not worth saving, or that they can save them without religion; and the great mass of those who may nominally belong to the sects, we know, hold that salvation is attainable in every

form of religion, and many that it is attainable without any form. The point, then, at which we are to aim cannot be doubtful. We are called specially to convince the American population that *they have souls, souls to be saved or lost, and which cannot be saved without Jesus Christ in his church.* Controversial works which overlook this fact, and assume that Protestants still retain some elements of Christianity, can avail us but little. They do not lay the axe at the root of the tree; do not strike the heart of the evil; are not adapted to the questions of the day; and, however logical they may be, they fail to convince, because their premises are not conceded. It is of the greatest importance that we bear this in mind, and govern ourselves accordingly.

The work assigned us here and now is a great and painful work. We cannot address those out of the church as men who err merely as to the form of Christianity, and are yet resolved not to part with the substance. Unhappily, we are required to present our church, not merely under the relations of the true and the beautiful, but under the relation of the necessary and indispensable. We are compelled by the existing state of thought and feeling to present it, not merely to men who hold the truth in error, as the corrective of their intellectual aberrations, but to men under the wrath of God, as the grand and only medium of salvation. We must address the world around us, not merely as aliens from the church, but as being therefore aliens from God, without faith, without hope, without charity, without the first and simplest elements of the Christian life, as dead in trespasses and sins, and with no possible means of attaining to eternal life, but in embracing heartily, and faithfully, and perseveringly the religion we offer them. We must show them that they have souls, that these souls will live for ever, in eternal bliss or eternal woe; that they are now in sin, and in sin which deserves eternal wrath, and from which there is no deliverance save in being joined to our church. In a word, we must address them, in regard to these matters, in the same language and tone in which we should if they were Turks or pagans. No account can be made of the Christianity they may nominally profess; no reliance can be placed on it, and no appeal can be safely made to it.

It was the conviction that they had souls to be saved, and that they could not save them out of the church of Christ, and their earnest effort to make others feel the same, that enabled Froude, Newman, and others, to produce that

remarkable movement in the Anglican establishment which has given so many choice spirits to the church. It was by telling the people that they had immortal souls to save, and that they could not save them otherwise than through Christ in his church, that the blessed apostles and their successors, aided by divine grace, converted the world to Christianity; it was by their stern and awful rebukes of heresy, by showing its disastrous effects upon the soul, by declaring in tones of fearful strength and startling energy, that all who were out of the ark perished, and that all who separate or are separated from unity are separated from God and in danger of eternal death, that the fathers guarded against or suppressed the earlier heresies, and kept the world for centuries united in the profession of the Catholic faith. It is only by following such examples, by convicting those out of the church of sin, and convincing them of the fact, and of their need, of salvation, that we can recall them to the bosom of the church, and persuade them to come into the way of salvation.

It will not do to shrink from this stern, bold, and awful manner of presenting the church and her claims. There is no use in trying to persuade ourselves that strong and decided language is not called for, that we must speak to the world around us in soft and gentle accents, and not venture to arraign it for its unbelief, for its iniquity, and to tell it plainly that it is in the road to perdition. It is idle to suppose that we may win it to God, by telling it, expressly or by implication, that it is a very good world, a very candid and pious world, virtually a Catholic world, only suffering from inculpable error, only separated from us because it has had no opportunity of learning our holy faith. Undoubtedly, we are never to forget charity, without which a man is as sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal; undoubtedly, he who contends for the Gospel is bound to contend for it in the spirit of the Gospel; undoubtedly, vituperation and abuse are as impolitic as they are unchristian; but we must be careful not to mistake liberality for charity, the natural meekness or amiability of our own dispositions for the meekness and tenderness of religion. We must never really or apparently strike hands with iniquity, or encourage error in her work of destruction, through fear of offending the fastidiousness or of wounding the delicate sensibilities of her votaries. No man who knows aught of the Gospel needs to be reminded of its exhaustless charity and infinite

tenderness; and no one who knows any thing of human nature is ignorant that the road to the understanding lies through the affections, and that in dealing with individuals we cannot show too much sweetness and gentleness of disposition; but there is nothing incompatible with all this in setting forth in firm and even startling tones the solemn truths of our religion, let them convict whom they may. The prophet Nathan showed no uncharitableness, no want of tenderness, when he said to David, "Thou art the man:" nor did our Lord, when he called the Jews "hypocrites," a "race of vipers," and likened them to "whitened sepulchres, which outwardly appear to men beautiful, but within are full of dead men's bones and of all filthiness." Nor, again, are we uncharitable, if, when we see a man rushing blindfold into the flames, we tell him whither he is rushing, and at what peril. Love can and often must proclaim severe truths, use hard arguments, and speak in tones of fearful power; and the deeper, the truer, the more tender it is, the more firm and uncompromising, the more stern and unflinching it will prove itself, whenever occasion requires. Who calls the surgeon cruel and uncharitable, because he probes to the bottom or cuts to the quick? Who regards the director of consciences harsh and wanting in charity, because he fears not to characterize the mortal sin of his penitent, and to insist, whatever the pain or mortification, on its being abandoned? In moral surgery, we have as yet discovered no letheon, and to heal it is often necessary to inflict even excruciating pain. Often, often, is it necessary to wound, if we would heal. Our Lord himself was wounded. "He was bruised for our sins," and none can come to him or be brought to him, till wounded for his sake as he was for ours. It cannot be avoided in the nature of things. But the Christian who gives pain, though he give it with a steady hand and an unflinching nerve, suffers more pain than he gives. It is not always safe to conclude that the man of a severe exterior, of firm and decided speech, who makes no compromise with sin, and yields nothing to error or her deluded votaries, is necessarily hard-hearted and a stranger to the infinite tenderness of the Gospel; or that your pretty men with smiling faces, bland tones, gentle caresses, and ready condescensions, are not sometimes cold and heartless, that they are generally men of warm and gushing hearts, large souls, and generous sympathies, prepared to sacrifice all they have and all they are for the love of God and their neighbour.

He who sacrifices the truth sacrifices charity, and he who withholds the truth needed—the precise truth needed—by his age or country does sacrifice it. If that truth be offensive, and he tells it, it will offend, whatever the soft phraseology in which he may tell it. If, in order to save its offensiveness, he wraps it up in circumlocutions and a mass of verbiage which conceal it, he does not tell it, and his labor counts for nothing. If these do not conceal it, if in spite of them it is divined in its clearness, distinctness, and power, they take nothing from its offensiveness, and it might have been as well told in plain, direct, and appropriate terms. After all, the least offensive, because the only honest, way of speaking, is to call things by their proper, their *Christian* names. We gain nothing in the long run by the roundabout, the soft, or supple phraseology which timid or politic people sometimes fancy it necessary to use to wrap up their meaning, as we use jam, jelly, or molasses, to wrap up disagreeable medicine; nor is such phraseology so respectful or so conciliating as is often supposed. To adopt it is to treat those we address as mere children, to whom we must not speak in the strong masculine tones we use when speaking to full-grown men. Few people like to be so addressed. Even your most delicate and fastidious lady prefers the gentleman who always converses with her in his simple, natural tones, and with the strong, clear, manly sense with which he speaks to one of his own sex, to the exquisite who fancies that whenever he addresses her he must simper, and soften his words and tones. He who has the truth, and utters it boldly, without circumlocution or reticence, with freedom, firmness, dignity, and energy, proving that he speaks from no motive but the love of God and the salvation of souls, though he may be feared, though he may be resisted, and in some ages and countries gain the crown of martyrdom, may always count on being personally respected, and, what is far more to his purpose, on commanding respect for his cause.

We should never forget that there is that even in the most abandoned of our race which loathes the timid and cringing, and admires the strong, the manly, and the intrepid. The free, firm, consistent, and fearless utterance of great and awful truths goes home to the minds and hearts even of the unbelieving and the heretical, and makes them tremble as did Felix before the blessed Apostle St. Paul. It was not the phrase and tone of the nursery that terrified the corrupt and hardened governor. It was no fear on the

part of St. Paul, then a prisoner before him, to call things by their Christian names, no forbearance to characterize the deep-dyed sinner as he deserved; but it was the minister of God speaking to his conscience, in stern and awful majesty unrolling before him his guilt, convicting him of sin, showing him the justice of God, presenting him the last judgment, and ringing in his very soul the sentence, "Depart, ye cursed, into everlasting fire!" that made the seared reprobate quake with fear. It is only when the minister of God so speaks that he makes the guilty tremble; and whenever he so speaks, no matter how unbelieving or heretical the sinner may be, how often or how long he may have scoffed at the idea of death, judgment, heaven, and hell, he will tremble; for God is at the bottom of his heart to give efficacy to the word uttered. If you have God's truth, in God's name give it free utterance. Let it speak in its own deep and awful tones; let its voice sound out a voice of doom to the guilty, a voice of consolation and joy to the just. Stand behind it, and let it have free course. Dare never tamper with it. Earth and hell may rise up against it, but it is mightier than earth and hell. Stand erect in the dignity of humility and the majesty of love, and God speaks through you, and the word that goes forth from you must go to the heart of the people, rive it as the thunderbolt rives the hoary oak, and all that is not depraved in man, all that is generous and noble in nature, and all that is true and mighty in heaven, shall work for you.*

* What event in modern times has so struck the imagination, gone so to the heart of mankind, and called forth such a loud burst of applause, or done so much to reveal the majesty of God's minister, and to command universal homage and respect for the papacy, as the stern and terrible rebuke of the autocrat of all the Russias by the late sovereign pontiff? You told us the papacy was dead. You mocked at the feeble old man in the Vatican. The most powerful monarch of the day presents himself before that feeble old man, that aged monk standing on the brink of the grave, and that monarch at a few bold words turns pale, weeps as a child, and the world thrills with joy to learn that there is still a power on earth that can make the tyrant look aghast, the knees of the mighty smite together, and with severe and awful majesty assert the cause of the poor and vindicate the just. You told us the papacy was dead. You heard it speak to Nicholas of Russia, not in the tone of a suppliant, not in the tone of a courtier, but as became the minister of God, before whom diadems and sceptres weigh not a feather, and power is but weakness, and you have eyes and ears only for the papacy, and you feel and speak as if the pope were the only power under God on earth. See what the minister of God may do, when he asserts the majesty of truth, and displays the awful grandeur of his mission. That living word of the pope to the tyrant, to the schismatic, the heretic, the

Who are they who command men, touch the human heart, and make the race work with them and for them,—who but the heroic? And what form of heroism is comparable to the Christian? What are your Alexanders, your Hannibals, your Cæsars, your Napoleons, by the side of St. Peter, St. Paul, St. John, or St. Athanasius, St. Leo, St. Basil, St. Ambrose, St. Augustine, St. Gregory, St. Bernard, St. Dominic, St. Francis, St. Thomas, St. Ignatius, St. Vincent de Paul, and thousands of others, who rose above the world while in it, sanctified the earth, and exalted human nature to communion with the divine? It is the Christian hero, he who counts nothing dear, who holds his life in his hand, who fears not the wrath of man nor the rage of hell, that, under God, overcomes the world, and wins all minds and hearts to the faith and love of Jesus Christ. He alone who fears God, who fears sin, but fears nothing else, is the world's master, and able to do whatever he pleases.

In this country the church is placed by the constitution and laws on as high ground as any one of the sects, while, by the appointment of Almighty God, she is placed infinitely above them all. Not here, then, most assuredly, is the Catholic to fear to speak above his breath; not here is he to crouch and hide. He is at home here, and no man has a better right to be here. Let him stand erect; let his tone be firm and manly; let his voice be clear and distinct, his speech strong and decided, as becomes the citizen of a free state, and a freeman of the commonwealth of God. Let him be just to himself, just to his fellow-citizens, just to his religion,—be what his religion commands him to be, and fear nothing. The American people may fear him, they may not love him; but if he bows and cringes, and whimpers and begs, or scrapes and palavers, they not only will not love him, but they will despise him; for though puerile, deluded, and perverse on religion, they are in most other things straightforward and honest, high-minded and honorable. They love plain speaking and plain dealing, and they never fail to do honor to the man who, from a sense of duty, tells them in strong and direct terms the awful truths he is bound, or regards himself as bound by his church to proclaim, though by doing so he convicts them of unbelief and heresy, of deep and aggravated sinfulness before God.

persecutor of the saints, has revealed to the world the astounding fact, that to-day the papacy is not only living, not only not dead, but that it has a power even in the affairs of this world that it never had before.

"The road to the understanding lies through the affections." Be it so. But the first affection we are to seek to win is that of respect for our church, and that we must win by first winning respect for ourselves as Catholics; for the sects are slow to distinguish between the church and her members. The spirit we manifest will be assumed to be approved and inspired by our church. Nothing tends more to give Protestants a mean opinion of us, than for us to be tame or apologetic in setting forth or in defending our faith. We once loaned a Protestant lady a pamphlet by an eminent Catholic divine. She read it, and returned it with a note, stating that she could not endure it, for nothing was so disgusting to her as to find a Catholic apologizing for his church, or defending it in a Protestant spirit. "If he believes his church infallible, there can be nothing in her history which he can believe needs an apology; and if he believes himself divinely commissioned, why does he not speak as one having authority?" Protestants, of course, in general appear delighted, when they find us apologizing or seeming to apologize for our church, or apparently laboring to soften what they regard as the severity of her doctrines; but it is only because in so doing we seem to them to surrender her infallibility. All our gentle phraseology, all our conciliating manners, all our apparently liberal expositions in the sense of latitudinarians, appear to them only as so many departures from what the church once insisted on; and while they applaud us for our Protestant tendency, they can but ill disguise their contempt for us, since, in spite of such tendency, we pretend that our church is infallible and invariable; and they can conclude from our conduct only that either we are not sincere in our concessions, or the church, like the sects, modifies her doctrines to suit times and places.

Protestants generally believe that the church is not what she was formerly; that, in fact, she has greatly improved since the reformation; and this in consequence of finding in her so little that is to them unreasonable or offensive. They cannot understand, if she was in the sixteenth century what she now appears to be, how the reformers could have been so enraged against her, or why they should have judged it necessary to separate from her communion; and it is a common theory among them, on which they seek to justify the reformers, that their movement has done by its reaction perhaps more to reform the church than to reform those who separated or have remained separated. But this, though

it may tend, in some measure, to diminish hostility to her as she now is, is to them an unanswerable argument against accepting her for what she claims to be; for it implies progress, improvement, which is incompatible with the claim of catholicity and infallibility. Whatever a Catholic says which looks, or can be imagined to look, like a departure from the earlier formularies of the church, though it should render her doctrines less unpalatable to them, has a direct tendency to keep them out of her communion.

Hence there is no use in affecting a liberal tone, and in treating those outside as if we regarded them, upon the whole, as very good Christians, not far out of the way, meaning right, perfectly well disposed, in only inculpable error, and by no means necessarily out of the way of salvation; for it only tends, on the one hand, to make them distrust our church, or, on the other, our sincerity. It only goes to confirm them in one of their most dangerous and unjust prejudices against us. Surveying the strange, eventful history of our church, seeing her survive all attacks, gaining strength by every effort to crush her, and turning every apparent defeat into a victory, a triumph, Protestants say she must be a miracle of craft and cunning, and they attribute her preservation and triumphs to her wily and adroit policy. They, in general, hold us to be destitute of principle, but extremely cunning and politic. The popular, though erroneous, sense of the word *Jesuitical* is the popular Protestant sense of the word *Catholic*. If we adopt the liberal tone of modern times, speak in the modern spirit, show ourselves ready to conform to prevailing modes of thought, anxious to throw off whatever appears exclusive or rigorous, or disposed to apologize for past practices not exactly acceptable to our own age and country, and to excuse them on the ground that they originated in the ignorance or barbarism of the times, or in popular sentiments now obsolete, we gain no credit for our church, or if so, none for ourselves; but seem only to furnish proofs of her consummate policy and suppleness, and of her want of fixed and unalterable principles, leaving her always at liberty to assume the shape and color of the time and place, be they what they may.

In a country like ours, where we are a feeble minority, even if principle permitted, the affectation of a liberal and condescending spirit, of a disposition to conform to the views and feelings of the majority, and a studied forbearance to assert the claims of our church in all their rigor and exclu-

siveness, would indicate a policy the very reverse of wise. Where Catholics are the immense majority, where place, fashion, wealth, and social influence are in their hands, moderation towards dissenters, a mild and condescending demeanor, and the disposition to yield to their ignorance all that can be yielded without giving up any portion of the sacred deposit of faith, may be wise, and even a duty; for it is the condescension of the superior, of the nobleman, to those below him, always welcome, and seldom failing to beget gratitude and to win confidence. But the condescension of the social inferior to the social superior is a different thing. Here, where the social and political influences, instead of being ours, are against us, where we are voted in advance suspicious persons, and where our very virtues are tortured into grounds of accusation against us, such a policy would be regarded as sycophantic, or as tame and cringing, as a proof of meanness, weakness, or suppleness, and would only excite contempt or distrust. Our liberal professions, our apparent sympathy with views and feelings Protestant rather than Catholic, would be supposed to be affected,—adopted to ward off hostility till we had gained a footing, and become strong enough to exhibit our rigor or exclusiveness. It is lawful to learn of an enemy; and we all know, or may know, that this is the precise view which Protestants very generally take of such a policy, wherever Catholics are in the minority, and silly enough to adopt it.

It is hard for innocence to conceive that she is suspected, and when she does get some glimmering of the fact, she almost inevitably blunders, and in attempting measures to remove suspicions adopts the very measures most likely to confirm them. No man can have studied the history of Catholics living in a Protestant community without being often reminded of this fact. They judge Protestants too often by themselves, and transfer to them their own innocence, candor, and good faith. But this will not do. What we are to aim at is not to make our religion acceptable to them as they are, but to make them feel, that, so long as they are what they are, they are wrong, and in need of "a radical change of heart." Our deepest and truest policy is to have no policy at all. By the very fact that we are Catholics, we are freed from all dependence on mere human policy. We have the truth, and it will sustain us, instead of our being obliged to sustain it. It is the glory of our religion that she identifies the expedient and the right, the true and the poli-

tic. That is most expedient, most politic, which is most consonant with her spirit; and the most effectual way of subserving the interests of the church is for her members to be Catholics and nothing else,—to throw themselves without reserve and with entire confidence on God, and to leave him to support them, instead of their officiously undertaking to support him. We shall best advance the Catholic cause by showing that we hold our religion true and sacred, complete and all-sufficient, that we live for it, and for it alone, and that we do and can regard none who do not so live as the friends of God. God made and gave us our religion, and we have nothing to do with modifying it to suit prevailing tastes and prejudices, contracting it here or expanding it there, now by our ingenious distinctions increasing its laxity, now its rigor. It is perfect as God gave it; and it is ours simply to receive and obey. If its rigor or its laxity prove an odor of death unto death to some, that is not our affair, and the less we meddle with it the better.

In censuring loose and latitudinarian views, in commending the free, firm, frank statement of Catholic truth in its awful severity as well as in its sweetness, in contending for a bold, manly, independent, straightforward, and energetic, as well as affectionate mode of addressing those who are without, and the fearless and faithful proclamation of the precise truth needed to rebuke the reigning error or the reigning sin of the age or the country, we trust no one will be so foolish as to suppose that we are urging a low, vulgar, harsh, or vituperative method of presenting the claims of our religion, and of addressing those who unhappily reject them. Fidelity to the cause we advocate, and the bold and firm assertion of unpalatable truths, do by no means require us to lose command of ourselves, or to forget the meekness of the Christian, or the courtesy of the gentleman. Firm adherence to principle, strong masculine language, plain and energetic speech, and even bold and severe denunciations, when called for by the rigor of our faith, and justified by the facts or arguments we adduce, are no departure from good breeding, and are rarely, if ever, offensive. What is to be avoided is not the severity of reason, but the severity of passion. Loose and violent declamations, low wit, vulgar and opprobrious epithets applied in ill temper, sustained by no principle, warranted by no argument, and called for by no truth established in our essay or discourse, are wrong, offend, and justly offend, and we should be sorry to suppose

that there is any Catholic capable either of recommending or of resorting to them. But the severity of authority exercising its clearly legitimate functions, of charity speaking out from the depth of her infinite concern for the salvation of souls, or of reason evidently deducing necessary conclusions from premises regarded as incontrovertible, is always allowable, and is never held to be abusive, or a transgression of good manners.

In direct personal addresses to Protestants, it is rarely necessary to call them heretics, and we may with propriety, after the illustrious Bossuet, call them "our separated or our dissenting brethren," if we call them so only through conventional politeness. But if we avoid the term heretic, and call them our separated brethren for the purpose of implying some sort of religious sympathy with them, to conceal from ourselves or from them the fact that all good Catholics presume them to be heretics, or so as to produce an impression on those within or those without that we do not look upon heresy and schism as deadly sins, we occasion scandal, and have nothing to plead in our justification. If, on the other hand, we call Protestants heretics in ill-humor, from the virulence of passion, for the sake of wounding their feelings and insulting them, we are also unjustifiable; for even the truth spoken for unlawful ends is libellous, and the greater the truth, not unfrequently, the greater the libel. But if, in addressing Catholics, or in reasoning against Protestant errors, we call Protestants heretics, because they are so in fact, and because we would call them by their *Christian* name, either for the sake of leading them to reflect on the danger to which they are exposed, or for the sake of guarding the unwary against their seductions and the contamination of their heresies, we give them no just cause of offence, and do only what by the truth and charity of the Gospel we are bound to do.

Undoubtedly the mass of the American people are deeply prejudiced against the Christian religion; undoubtedly they are at heart strongly opposed to Catholics; but the course we urge is not likely to render them more prejudiced or opposed. Touching the matter of religion, we have of course nothing to say in their favor, and this is, no doubt, in the estimation of Christians, to say the worst against them; but in the natural order, in the domestic and social virtues which have their reward in this life, in the natural strength of their understanding, acuteness of intellect, and

honesty and energy of character, they by no means rank lowest in the scale of nations. Should we call them thieves, robbers, liars, cowards, or in general hard-hearted and cruel, they would be offended at our injustice, or smile at our folly, and justly; for we should then address them in our own name, on the authority of our own reason, or from the ebullition of our own passions, as weak and sinful men addressing their equals, and we could offer no excuse or palliation of our conduct. But if we speak to them in relation to the supernatural order, not from ourselves, but from the word of God, and tell them in the spirit of ardent charity, plainly, directly, unreservedly, energetically, what our religion commands, and assure them in unequivocal terms and tones that they are out of the way, following the devices of their own hearts, the delusions of the devil, wedded to damnable heresies, under the wrath and condemnation of Almighty God, and that their only possible chance of escape is in humble submission to that very church against which their fathers wickedly rebelled, and which they themselves so haughtily reject, though they may be pricked in their hearts, though they may be startled from their dreaming, or may even bid us go our way for this time, till they find a more convenient season, they will respect our principles, and acknowledge in their hearts the free, noble, lofty, and uncompromising spirit of our church, and the high worth of character she gives to her children. It was thus spoke the prince of the apostles on the day of Pentecost:—"Ye men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you, by miracles, and wonders, and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you, as you also know; this same, being delivered up by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, *you have crucified and put to death* by the hands of wicked men. . . . . Therefore let all the house of Israel know most assuredly, that God hath made him to be Lord and Christ, this same Jesus whom *you have crucified.* Now when they heard these things, they had compunction in their heart; and they said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do? But Peter said to them, Do penance, and be baptized *every one of you*, in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of your sins."—Acts ii. 22–41.

Protestants, indeed, expect Catholics to speak in this way. They expect them to speak differently from their

own scribes and elders, with whom they are wearied half to death, and whose doubt, and hesitation, and arrogance they find all but insupportable. They know the Catholic claims to speak with authority, as divinely commissioned to teach, and they wish him to speak in character. They are disgusted when he descends from the pulpit to the rostrum, or from the preacher sinks into the mere reasoner, taking their standpoint, and discoursing to them in their own spirit, as one of their own number. They demand of him what he professes to have, and which they know their own ministers have not; and if he gives it not, they conclude it is because he has it not to give. He is then, say they, with all his lofty pretensions to authority, no better than one of us; and they turn away in disappointment and disgust. Let him speak as one having authority, as the authorized minister of God, never forgetting his commission, never forgetting that he is priest and doctor, and that it is not he that teaches, but God through him, and, cold, and unbelieving, and heretical as they may be, they cannot but listen with awe, and some of them with profit.*

The great body of the American people are serious, plain, and practical, little addicted to mere intellectual speculations, and not easily moved by what does not promise some positive result. They are not averse to change, have no invincible attachment to old ways and usages, or to the sects in the bosom of which they have been reared, and can, for what appears to them a solid reason, abandon them without much reluctance; but no reason drawn from merely intellectual or æsthetic considerations will appear to them sufficient. The only reasons which can weigh much with them, indeed with any people, are such as are drawn from ethical sources. They may be shown the truth and beauty, the consistency, grand-

* We are often reminded, when we insist on this, that St. Francis de Sales, whose labors restored over seventy thousand Protestants to the church, was wont to say that "more flies can be caught with honey than with vinegar." This is unquestionably true, but they who are familiar with the saint's works do not need to be told that in his own practice he gave considerable latitude to the meaning of the word *honey*. Certainly we ask for no more bold and severe mode of presenting Catholic truth, or stronger or severer language against Protestants, than he was in the habit of adopting. Even the editor of his controversial works did not deem it advisable to publish them without softening some of their expressions. In fact, much of the *honey* of the saints generally, especially of such saints as St. Athanasius, St. Hilary of Poictiers, and St. Jerome, would taste very much like vinegar, we suspect, to some of our modern delicate palates.

eur, and majesty of our religion, and remain untouched; for it is not as philosophy or as art that they need it. Individuals in particular localities, or of a peculiar temperament, may at first be induced to think of entering our communion, as they are led to pass from one sect to another, to satisfy some particular intellectual want, to please some special taste, or to indulge some specific social or devotional tendency; but the great body of the people will remain unmoved and be unaffected by our profound philosophy, our learned expositions, our conclusive arguments, our eloquent appeals, unless we succeed in presenting the question as one involving life and death. In vain we show the truth of our doctrine, in vain we set forth our pure and lofty morality, in vain we exhibit the solemn grandeur, imposing magnificence, pomp, and splendor of our ritual, in vain we charm them with the simple majesty and unction of our divine hymns, or entrance them with our heaven-inspired chants, if we do not bring the matter home to the conscience, make them feel that they have souls to be saved, that they are sold unto sin, are under the wrath of God, and have no possible means of escaping everlasting perdition but by coming into the church, and submitting to her authority and direction. So long as we leave their consciences at ease, so long as we address only the intellect or the sense of the beautiful, or leave them to feel that it is not absolutely impossible to be safe where they are, we have given them no solid or intelligible reason for becoming Catholics.

There is not the least sense or propriety in addressing the great mass of Protestants, especially in this country, as if they were already Christian, sincerely and honestly Christian, according to their understanding of Christianity, and only in intellectual error as to the true form of Christianity. We cannot repeat this too often, nor insist upon it too earnestly. The error is moral rather than intellectual. The question between them and us is a question, not of the form, but of the substance. The whole head is sick, the whole heart is sad. From the sole of the foot to the top of the head there is no soundness. The disease has penetrated the whole system, and reached even the seat of life itself. The remedy which shall restore them is not the mere exposition of the truth and beauty of our holy religion, in contrast with what they still nominally profess to believe. It is with them as it was with the unbelieving Jews in the days of our blessed Saviour. Now, as then, there is no beauty in him,

or comeliness; they see him, and there is no sightliness in him that they should be desirous of him. Despised and the most abject of men, a man of sorrows, and acquainted with infirmity, his look is, as it were, hidden and despised, and they esteem him not. Surely he hath borne their infirmities and carried their sorrows, and they have thought him, as it were, a leper, and as one struck by God and afflicted.—Isaias, liii. 2–4. They have eyes, but they do not see, ears, but they do not hear, hearts, but they do not understand. What is true, beautiful, pure, and salutary in our holy religion is to them a stumbling-block, as it was to the Jews, or foolishness, as it was to the gentiles. Not to them is Christ crucified, whom we preach, the power of God and the wisdom of God.—1 Cor. i. 23, 24.

What is doubted, scorned, rejected, is not Catholicity as a form of Christianity, but Christianity itself. It is Christ crucified that is denied. The doubt goes to the bottom, and strikes at all revealed religion, at the whole order of grace. Forms are easily got over. No small portion of the people even now have no doubt of the identity of Catholicity and Christianity, if Christianity means a positive religion, any thing more than a form of natural religion. The active cause of the hostility to the church is the want of belief in all positive religion, in the doubt that God has spoken or made a revelation of his will to men, established a church for their salvation, which he loves, protects, and out of which he will save no one. No matter what they pretend, no matter what account they give of themselves, no matter what say their old symbols and formularies which they retain as so many heirlooms, it is Christianity itself they doubt, whenever it is assumed to belong to the supernatural order, to be inflexible and unalterable, authoritative and supreme, or to be elevated at all above mere natural morality, with perhaps a few sanctions more distinct and solemn than natural reason unaided could of itself have discovered. It is simplicity, not charity, to question this. We cannot prudently address them as believers simply holding the truth in error, but, if we wish to arrest their attention, we must address them as sinners in rebellion against God, dead in trespasses and sins, under the wrath and condemnation of God,—reason with them of sin, of justice, of chastity, and the judgment to come, and compel them to cry out, Men and brethren, what shall we do to be saved? What shall we do to be saved? asked from

the depths of the affrighted soul, in the breaking up of the whole moral nature, trembling before the awful judgment of God, is the question; and till men ask it in deep and terrible earnestness, they will never become real and true-hearted Catholics. When they have once been made to feel their sinfulness, their danger, their lost and perishing condition, out of Christ, we shall have little difficulty in convincing them that there is no safety for them out of the communion of the church. It is not so much of infidelity, or of heresy, that they need to be convicted, as of sin; not so much of Catholicity as the only true Christianity, as of Christianity itself, that they require to be convinced; not so much of this or that particular error, as of the grand mother error of all, that they are safe where they are, and may be saved in any religion or in none, that it is necessary to disabuse them.

We say nothing new or recondite. Our holy religion has from the first been addressed to sinners, and its grand assumption is that all men are sinners, dead in trespasses and sins, till made alive in Christ Jesus. The wages of sin is death, and death hath passed upon all men, for all have sinned. The church addresses herself to a world lying in wickedness, festering in its own iniquity, as the divinely provided means, and the only means, of their restoration to spiritual life and health. Her mission is the revelation of the glory of God in the salvation of sinners. It is against sin, sin in all its forms, in all its disguises, in all its subterfuges, in high places or low places, that she is commissioned to carry on a fierce and exterminating war. She is here in this world the church militant. She fights and never ceases to fight sin, for she is holy, and she only can overcome it. Wherever she sends her missionary, the brave soldier of the cross, she sends him to a world dead in trespasses and sins, to carry to them the Gospel of life and immortality. She sends him, not to find the Gospel with them, to tell them that what he brings is preferable to what they have, but yet it is possible for them to be saved without it; but to tell them that they are dead, that they are strangers to eternal life, that he has eternal life to offer them, that he alone has it, and that they must receive it from his hands or not receive it at all. "How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the Gospel of peace, that bring glad tidings of good things!" He goes to sinners to proclaim, in the name of his Master, the glad tidings of

eternal life, through a crucified, a risen Redeemer; and who but he has these glad tidings to proclaim? "Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life." And where is Christ, he who is the resurrection and the life, who has come that we might have life, and have it more abundantly, to be found as the Saviour of sinners, and the giver of eternal life, but in his church, his mystical body, his spouse, his beloved? Assuredly nowhere else. The words of eternal life are with us, and not elsewhere,—in our church, and in her only. Need we, then, fear to say so? Need we, then, hesitate to tell the world lying in wickedness around us, that they are destitute of eternal life, that they are in sin, and to beseech them, as they love their own souls, to come into the ark where, and where alone there is safety?

There is no salvation out of the church. Men must come into her communion or be lost, and lost for ever. If it be not so, why has God instituted his church, why has he given her authority, and commanded her to teach all nations until the consummation of the world? Why are we so attached to her, why does she hold so high a place in our affections, and why would we rather suffer a thousand deaths than swerve one iota from the faith she enjoins? Why do we strive to bring all men into her sacred enclosure? Why visit our missionaries every land, and in every land suffer privation, want, distress, persecution, and death, to bring men into the church, if salvation is possible without her agency, if the people who sit in the region and shadow of death, by following such light as they have, can be saved, though living and dying out of her communion, and in ignorance of her very existence? Concede the possibility, and the conduct of the apostles, the fathers, the saints and martyrs, of zealous Catholics in every age, is madness, folly, or fanaticism.

But, if it be true, and as sure as God exists and can neither be deceived nor deceive it is true, that there is no salvation out of the church, what a fearful responsibility should we not incur, were we to forbear to proclaim it, or, by our mistimed or misplaced qualifications, to encourage the unbelieving, the heretical, or the indifferent to hope the contrary! And how much more fearful still, if we should go further, and attempt in our publications to prove that he who firmly insists on it is harsh, unjust, uncharitable, running in his rash zeal to an unauthorized extreme! No

doubt, the truth is always and everywhere to be adhered to, let the consequences be what they may; no doubt, he who errs by his rigor is to be rebuked, as well as he who errs by his laxity; but if, in our zeal to rebuke imaginary rigor, we should compel the missionary to prove the necessity of his church against his own friends before he can be at liberty to assert it against infidels and heretics, if we run before him and intercept his arrows winged at the sinner's conscience, or follow immediately after and bind up and assuage the wounds they may have inflicted, our zeal would but indifferently atone for the good we hinder, or the scandal we cause. These poor souls, for whom our Lord shed his precious blood, for whom bleed afresh the dear wounds in his hands, his feet, his side, bound in the chains of error and sin, suspended over the precipice, ready to drop into the abyss below, admonish all who have hearts of flesh or any bowels of compassion to speak out, to cry aloud in awful and piercing tones to warn them of their danger, rather than by ingenious distinctions or qualifications to flatter them, or to have the appearance of flattering them, with the hope that, after all, their condition is not perilous.

We speak not now in relation to other ages or countries. We are discussing the question in its relation to our own countrymen, the great practical question of salvation, as it comes up here and now. We have no concern with distant or merely speculative cases, or with scholastic distinctions and qualifications which have and can have no practical application here. The question is, What are we authorized and bound by our religion to proclaim to all those of our countrymen whom our words can reach? Here are the great mass out of the church, unbelieving and heretical, careless and indifferent, and it is idle to expect to make any general impression upon them, unless we present the question of the church as a question of life and death, unless we can succeed in convincing them, that, if they live and die where they are, they can never see God. This is the doctrine and the precise doctrine needed. Is it true? Yes or no? Is it denied? By those out of the church, certainly, and hence the great reason why they are content to live and die out of the church. Is it denied by those in the church? What Catholic dare deny it? To what individual or class of individuals are we authorized by our holy faith to promise even the bare possibility of salvation, without being joined to the visible communion of the church of God?

It is said that those without are simply bound to seek, and that we can deny them the possibility of salvation only on the condition that they do not seek? Be it so. But if they are bound to seek, it is because Almighty God commands them to seek, and gives them the grace which enables them to seek; and who is prepared to say, if they seek *cauta sollicitudine*, as St. Augustine makes it necessary for them to do, that they will not find? If God commands them to seek, they can find; for he never commands one to seek in vain. "Seek and ye shall find; knock and it shall be opened unto you . . . . . For every one that seeketh findeth, and to every one that knocketh it shall be opened."—St. Matt. vii. 7, 8. It is fair, then, to conclude, if there is one who does not find, to whom it is not opened, that he is one who does not seek; and if he does not seek, he is out of the church by his own fault. The grace of prayer is given unto every one, and every one can pray, and if he does, he shall receive; and it would impeach both the wisdom and the veracity of God to maintain the contrary.

Those of our countrymen not in the church may be divided into two classes, and each of these may be subdivided into two subordinate classes,—infidels and sectarians,—and each negative and positive; that is, infidels and sectarians who are such knowingly, and infidels and sectarians who are such through ignorance. The first two subdivisions are formal infidels or heretics, and are condemned for their sin of infidelity or heresy. Of these, there can be no question; not one of them can be saved, unless he become a member, truly a member, of the church. These know the will of God and do it not, and therefore "shall be beaten with many stripes."—St. Luke xii. 47. But what is to be said of them that are infidels or sectarians through ignorance? "The servant that knew not his master's will, but did things worthy of stripes," shall he not escape? Our Lord answers, not that he shall escape, but that "he shall be beaten with few stripes." The Holy Ghost represents the sinners in hell as saying,—"We have erred from the way of truth; and the light of justice hath not *shined unto us*, and the sun of understanding *hath not risen upon us.* We wearied ourselves in the way of iniquity and destruction, and have walked through hard ways; *but the way of the Lord we have not known.*"—Wisdom v. 6, 7. It is clear, then, that ignorance does not always excuse, and that the servant who knoweth not his master's will, though he may be punished

less than the one who does know it and doeth it not, will nevertheless be punished.

But they who are merely negative infidels, or unbelievers purely through ignorance, in consequence of never having heard about the Gospel, are not guilty of the sin of infidelity? Certainly not. Every Catholic is presumed to know that the 68th proposition of Bains, *Infidelitas pure negativa in his, quibus Christus non est prædicatus, peccatum est*, is a condemned proposition, and therefore that purely negative infidelity in those to whom Christ has not been preached is inculpable, — as St. Augustine teaches, the penalty of sin, not sin itself. But who *therefore* concludes that they are in the way of salvation, or that they can be saved without becoming living members of the body of our Lord? "Infidels of this sort," says St. Thomas, "are damned, indeed, for other sins which without faith cannot be remitted, but they are not damned for the sin of infidelity. Whence the Lord says, 'If I had not come and spoken to them, they would not have sin;' that is, as St. Augustine explains it, would not have the sin of not believing in Christ."* There is a considerable distance between being free from the formal sin of infidelity, and being in the way of salvation. No infidel, positive or negative, invincible or invincible ignorance, can be saved; "for without faith it is impossible to please God," and "he that believeth not shall be damned," and faith *in voto*, not *in re*, is inconceivable.—Heb. xi. 6; St. Mark xvi. 16. Neither of the subdivisions of the unbelieving class of our countrymen are, then, in the way of salvation.

But may it not prove better with sectarians? With those who are knowingly such, of course not, and nobody pretends that it can. But may not those who are baptized in heretical societies through ignorance, believing them to be the church of Christ, be regarded as in the way of salvation? We will let the Brothers Walenburch answer for us from St. Augustine. They are speaking *de excusationibus simpliciorum* among Protestants. The first excuse they notice, the influence of tyrants, &c., is nothing to our present purpose, and we begin with the second.

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* "Qui autem sic infideles, damnantur quidem propter alia peccata, quæ sine fide remitti non possunt; non autem propter infidelitatis peccatum. Unde Dominus dicit, Joan. xv. 22,—*Si non venissem, et locutus eis fuissem, peccatum non haberent.* Quod Augustinus (*Tract. in Joan.* lxxxix. ante med.) dicit, 'quod loquitur de illo peccato quo non crediderunt in Christum.'"—*Summa*, 2*a* 2*ae*. Q. 10. a. 1. in corp.

"The second excuse they make is, That not they who are born and educated in Protestant churches have separated themselves from the unity of the Catholic Church, but their ancestors, Calvin, Luther, &c. Let St. Augustine reply:—'But those who *through ignorance* are baptized there [with heretics], judging the sect to be the church of Christ, sin less than these [who know it to be heretical]; *nevertheless they are wounded by the sacrilege of schism*, and therefore sin not lightly, because others sin more gravely. For when it is said to certain persons, It shall be more tolerable for Sodom in the day of judgment than for you, it is not therefore said because the Sodomites will not be punished, but because the others will be more grievously punished.'

"The third excuse is, They say that they have been baptized, that they believe in Christ, apply themselves to good works, and therefore may hope for salvation, although they adhere to the party divided from the church. St. Augustine replies,—'We are accustomed from these words (1 Cor. xiii. 1–8) to show men that it avails them nothing to have either the sacraments or the faith, if they have not charity, in order that, when you come to Catholic unity, you may understand what is conferred on you, and how great is that in which you were before deficient. *For Christian charity cannot be kept out of the unity of the church;* and thus you may see that without it you are nothing, even though you have baptism and the faith, and by your faith are able to remove mountains. If this is also your opinion, let us not detest and scorn either the sacraments which we acknowledge in you, or the faith itself, but let us maintain charity, without which we are nothing, even with the sacraments and the faith. But we maintain charity, if we embrace unity; and we embrace unity when our knowledge is in unity through the words of Christ, not when through our own words we form a partial sketch.'

"The fourth excuse is, Some say that God is to be believed according to the measure of grace received from him; Catholics, indeed, believe many things which Protestants do not, but the former have received the five talents, the latter the two or three. They do not condemn Catholics, but they hope to be saved in the small measure which they have themselves received. But here may avail what we have just adduced from St. Augustine; for if even baptism and faith profit nothing without indispensable charity, much

less will profit a mere portion which is held in division and schism."*

This is high authority, and express to the purpose. It cuts off every possible excuse which our countrymen can allege, or which can be alleged for them. They who are brought up in the church, instructed in her faith, and admitted to her sacraments, if they break away from her, can be saved only by returning and doing penance; and all who knowingly resist her authority, or adhere to heretical and schismatical societies, knowing them to be such, are in the same category, and have no possible means of salvation without being reconciled to the church, and loosened by her from the bonds with which she has bound them. Thus far all is clear and undeniable. But even they who are in societies separated from the church through ignorance, believing them to be the church of Christ, according to the authorities adduced, are wounded by sacrilege, a most grievous sin, are destitute of charity, which cannot be kept out of the unity of the church, and without which they are nothing, and therefore, whatever may be the comparative degree of their sinfulness, are in the road to perdition, as well as the others, and no more than the others can be saved without being reconciled to the church. But these several classes include all of our countrymen not in the church, and therefore, as every one of these is exposed to the wrath and condemnation of God, we have the right, and are in duty bound, to preach to them all, without exception, that, unless they come into the church, and humbly submit to her laws, and persevere in their love and obedience, they will inevitably be lost.†

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* *De Controversiis Tractatus Generales IX., De Unit. Eccl et Schism.* cap. 15.

† *Vide* Bishop Hay, *Sincere Christian*, 2d. American edition, Philadelphia, pp. 345–390. This is a work of high authority, second to none in our language. It has fallen into our hands for the first time since the present article was written, or we should have drawn largely from its pages. We have small space left for extracts, but we cannot resist the temptation to quote an authority which the Rt. Reverend author cites from St. Fulgentius. "St. Fulgentius in the sixth century speaks thus: —'Hold most firmly, and without any doubt, that no one who is baptized out of the Catholic church can partake of eternal life, if before the end of this life he be not restored to the Catholic church and incorporated therein.'—*Lib. de Fid.* cap. 37." To the same effect we may cite St. Augustine. *Tract.* 45 *in Joan.* n. 15. "Non autem potest quisque per ostium, id est per Christum, egredi ad vitam æternam, quæ erit in specie, nisi per ipsum ostium, hoc est per eumdem Christum in Ecclesiam ejus,

Into the church, unquestionably; but not necessarily into the visible church, some may answer. We must distinguish between the body or exterior communion of the church, and the soul or interior communion. The dogma of faith

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quod est ovile ejus, intraverit ad vitam temporalem, quæ est in fide." This, taken in connection with its context and the scope of the general argument of the *Tract*, can not possibly be understood otherwise than in the sense of St. Fulgentius; and it is worthy of especial notice, that those recent theologians who seem unwilling to assent to this doctrine cite no authority from a single father or mediæval doctor of the church, not strictly compatible with it.

Unquestionably, authorities in any number may be cited to prove—what nobody disputes—that pertinacity in rejecting the authority of the church is essential to formal or culpable heresy, that persons may be in heretical societies without being culpable heretics, and therefore that we cannot say of all who live and die in such societies, that they are damned precisely for the sin of heresy. Father Perrone, and our own distinguished theologian, the erudite Bishop of Philadelphia, whose contributions have so often enriched our pages, cite passages in abundance to this effect, which, as Suarez asserts, is the uniform doctrine of all the theologians of the church; but they cite not a single authority of an earlier date than the seventeenth century, which even hints any thing more than this. But this by no means militates against St. Augustine, St. Fulgentius, the Brothers Walenburch, or Bishop Hay; because it by no means follows from the fact that one is not a formal heretic, that he is, so long as in a society alien to the church, in the way of salvation. A man may, indeed, not be damned for his erroneous faith, and yet be damned for sins not remissible without the true faith, and for the want of virtues impracticable out of the communion of the church. Father Perrone very properly distinguishes *material* heretics from *formal* heretics; but when treating the question *ex professo*, he by no means pronounces the former in the way of salvation; he simply remits them to the judgment of God, who, he assures us,—what nobody questions,—will consign no man to endless tortures, unless for a crime of which he is voluntarily guilty. *Tract. de Vera Relig. advers. Heterodox.* Prop. XI.

Moreover, Father Perrone, when refuting those who contend that salvation would be attainable if the visible church should fail, that is, by internal means, by being joined in spirit to the true church, maintains that in such case there would be no *ordinary* means of salvation; that when Christ founded his church, he intended to offer men an ordinary means, or rather a collection of means, which all indiscriminately, and at all times, might use for procuring salvation; that if God had been willing to operate our salvation by the assistance of internal means, there would have been no reason for instituting the church; that what is said of being joined to the church through the spirit, and of invincible ignorance, or of *material* heretics, could be admitted only on the hypothesis that God should provide no other means; that since it is certain that God has willed to save men by other means, namely, by the institution of the church visible and external, which is at all times easily distinguished from every sect, it is evident that the subterfuge imagined by non-Catholics is altogether unavailable. "*Obj.* Quæ a Catholicis proferuntur ad indefectibilitatem Ecclesiæ adstruendam nihili prorsus pendenda sunt. Etenim quamvis vera Ecclesia deficeret vel ex toto vel ex aliqua sua parte, non propterea sequeretur homines omni destitui salutis medio; posset enim Deus supplere mediis internis, possent homines spiritu saltem

simply says, out of the church there is no salvation, and you have no right to go further and add the word *visible or exterior*.

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conjungi cum vera Christi Ecclesia: præsertim cum error est omnino involuntarius et ineluctabilis; tunc enim nocere non potest, ut constat ex hæreticis *materialibus* nuncupatis,..... *Resp.* Non sequeretur homines omni destitui salutis medio *extraordinario, Tr. vel C. Ordinario, N.* Jam vero quando Christus condidit Ecclesiam suam, intendit præbere hominibus medium ordinarium, seu potius collectionem mediorum, quibus omnes indiscriminatim uti quovis tempore possent ad salutem sibi comparandam. Si Deus voluisset ope interiorum mediorum nostram operari salutem, nulla fuisset Ecclesiæ instituendæ ratio. Mediis internis, tum extraordinaria ratione nobis prospicit Deus, quando nulla alia suppetit via, neque nostra culpa factum est, ut media nobis ordinaria defuerint. Deus etiam posset hoc universum regere absque causis secundis, quod tamen non præstat, si excipias casus extraordinarios, cum nempe prodigia operatur. Quod vero adjiciunt adversarii de conjunctione per spiritum cum vera Ecclesia, de errore ineluctabili, aut de hæreticis materialibus, locum pariter habere tantum posset in hypothesi quod Deus nullum aliud medium suppeditaret: cum vero constet Deum alia ratione voluisse hominum saluti consulere, per institutionem videlicet Ecclesiæ visibilis atque externæ, quæque ab omni secta facile semper discerni possit, patet inutile prorsus esse ejusmodi effugium ab acatholicis excogitatum, qui nolunt veram Ecclesiam agnoscere."—*De Loc. Theologic.* p. 1, cap. 4, art. 1.

This says all we wish to say; for we are not discussing what is possible by a miracle of grace, but what is possible in the *order* of grace. Nor does the admission of an extraordinary interposition for our salvation, when the ordinary means, through no fault of ours, fail us, necessarily imply the possibility of salvation without the *medium ordinarium;* for it may be to bring us to it, or it to us, so that we may be saved by it, and not without it. That there may be persons in heretical and schismatical societies, invincibly ignorant of the church, who so perfectly correspond to the graces they receive, that Almighty God will by extraordinary means bring them to the church, is believable and perfectly compatible with the known order of his grace, as is evinced by the case of the eunuch of Queen Candace, that of Cornelius, the captain of the Italian band, and hundreds of others recorded by our missionaries, especially the missionaries of the Society of Jesus. In all the instances of extraordinary or miraculous intervention of Almighty God, whether in the order of nature, or in the order of grace, known to us, he has intervened *ad ecclesiam*, and there is not a shadow of authority for supposing that he ever has miraculously intervened or ever will intervene otherwise. To assume that he will, under any circumstances, intervene to save men without the *medium ordinarium* is perfectly gratuitous, to say the least. To bring men in an extraordinary manner to the church is easily admissible, because it does not dispense with the revealed economy of salvation, nor imply its inadequacy; but to intervene to save them without it appears to us to dispense with it, and to imply that it is not adequate to the salvation of all whom God's goodness leads him to save.

That those in societies alien to the church, invincibly ignorant of the church, if they correspond to the graces they receive, and persevere, will be saved, we do not doubt, but not where they are, or without being brought to the church. They are sheep, in the prescience of God Catholics, but sheep not yet gathered into the fold. "Other sheep I have,"

We add the word *exterior* or *visible* to distinguish the church out of which there is no salvation from the invisible church contended for by Protestants, and which no Catholic does or can admit. Without it the dogma of faith contains no meaning which even a Socinian or a transcendentalist has any urgent occasion to reject. Unquestionably, as our Lord in his humanity had two parts, his body and his soul, so we may regard the church, his spouse, as having two parts, the one exterior and visible, the other interior and invisible, or visible only by the exterior, as the soul of man is visible by his face; but to contend that the two parts are separable, or that the interior exists disconnected from the exterior, and is sufficient independently of it, is to assert, in so many words, the prevailing doctrine of Protestants, and, so far as relates to the indispensable conditions of salvation, to yield them, at least in their understanding, the whole question. In the present state of the controversy with Protestants, we cannot save the integrity of the faith, unless we add the epithet *visible* or *external*.

But it is not true that by so doing we add to the dogma of faith. The sense of the epithet is necessarily contained in the simple word *Church* itself, and the only necessity there is of adding it at all is in the fact that heretics have mutilated the meaning of the word *Church*, so that to them it no longer has its full and proper meaning. Whenever the word *Church* is used generally, without any specific qualification, expressed or necessarily implied, it means, by its own force, the visible as well as the invisible church, the body no less than the soul; for the body, the visible or external communion, is not a mere accident, but is essential

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says our blessed Lord, "that are not of this fold; THEM ALSO I MUST BRING; THEY SHALL HEAR MY VOICE; and there shall be made one fold and one shepherd." This is conclusive; and that these must be brought, and enter the fold, which is the church, in this life, St. Augustine expressly teaches in the words cited in the beginning of this note. See also *Sincere Christian*, p. 366. Almighty God can be at no loss to save by the *medium ordinarium* all who are willing to be saved, and that, too, without contradicting himself, departing from, or superseding the order of his grace; and, till better informed, we must believe it sounder theology to trust to his extraordinary grace to bring men to the church than it is to invincible ignorance to save them out of it; "quia et ipsa ignorantia in eis qui intelligere noluernnt, sine dubitatione peccatum est; in eis autem qui *non potuerunt*, pœna peccati. Ergo in utrisque non est justa excusatio, sed justa damnatio." St. Aug. Epist. 194 ad Sixtum, n. 27. Those who think otherwise we hope will not go so far as to say with Rosseau,—"Quiconque ose dire, '*hors de l'Eglise point de salut*,' doit être chassé de l'état!" *Du Contr. Soc.*, liv. iv. ch. 8.

to the church. The church by her very definition is "the congregation of men called by God through the evangelical doctrine, and professing the true Christian faith under the regimen of their legitimate pastors." * This definition may, perhaps, not be complete, but it certainly takes in nothing not essential to the very idea of the church. The church, then, is always essentially visible as well as invisible, exterior as well as interior; and to exclude from our conception of it the conception of visibility would be as objectionable as to exclude the conception of body from the conception of MAN. Man is essentially body and soul; and whosoever speaks of him—as *living* man—must, by all the laws of language, logic, and morals, be understood to speak of him in that sense in which he includes both. So in speaking of the church, if the analogy is admissible at all. Consequently, when faith teaches that out of the church there is no salvation, and adds herself no qualification, we are bound to understand the church in her integrity, as body no less than as soul, visible no less than invisible, external no less than internal. Indeed, if either were to be included rather than the other, it would be the body; for the body, the congregation or society, is what the word primarily and properly designates; and it designates the soul only for the reason that the living body necessarily connotes the soul by which it is a living body, not a corpse. We have, then, the right, nay, are bound by the force of the word itself, to understand by the church, out of which there is no salvation, the visible or external as well as the invisible or internal communion. Hence the Brothers Walenburch begin their Treatise on Unity and Schism by assuming,—"1. Ecclesiam vocatorum esse visibilem; 2. Extra communionem *externam* cum vera Jesu Christi Ecclesia, non esse salutem; Extare hoc tempore visibilem Ecclesiam Jesu Christi, cui se fideles debeant conjungere." *

What Bellarmine, Billuart, Perrone, and others say of persons pertaining to the soul and yet not to the body of the church makes nothing against this conclusion. They, indeed, teach that there is a class of persons that may be saved, who cannot be said to be *actu et proprie* in the church. Bellarmine and Billuart instance catechumens and

* FF. Walenburch, de Controv. Tract. IX. cap. 1. Vide Bellarmin. IV. Controv. Gen. Lib. 3. de Eccl. Milit. cap. 2.

* FF. Walenburch, *ubi supra*, cap. 2.

excommunicated persons, in case they have faith, hope, and charity; Perrone, so far as we have seen, instances catechumens only; and it is evident from the whole scope of their reasoning that all they say on this point must be restricted to catechumens, and such as are substantially in the same category with them; for they instance no others, and we are bound to construe every exception to the rule strictly, so as to make it as little of an exception as possible. If, then, our conclusion holds true, notwithstanding the apparent exception in the case of catechumens and those substantially in the same category, nothing these authors say can prevent it from holding true universally.

Catechumens are persons who have not yet received the visible sacrament of baptism *in re*, and therefore are not *actu et proprie* in the church, since it is only by baptism that we are made members of Christ and incorporated into his body. With regard to these "there is a difficulty," says Bellarmine, "because they are of the faithful, and if they die in that state may be saved; and yet no one can be saved out of the church, as no one was saved out of the ark, according to the decision of the fourth council of Lateran, C. 1:—*Una est fidelium universalis ecclesia, extra quam nullus omnino salvatur.* Still, it is no less certain that catechumens are in the church, not actually and properly, but only potentially, as a man conceived, but not yet formed and born, is called man only potentially. For we read, Acts ii. 41,—'They therefore that received his word were baptized; and there were *added* to them that day about three thousand souls.' Thus the council of Florence, in its Instructions for the Armenians, teaches that men are made members of Christ and the body of the church when they are baptized; and so all the fathers teach. . . . . Catechumens are not actually and properly in the church. How can you say they are saved, if they are out of the church?"

It is clear that this difficulty, which Bellarmine states, arises from understanding that to be in the church means to be in the visible church, and that when faith declares, out of the church no one can be saved, it means out of the visible communion. Otherwise it might be answered, since they are assumed to have faith, hope, and charity, they belong to the soul of the church, and that is all faith requires. But Bellarmine does not so answer, and since he does not, but proceeds to show that they do in a certain sense belong to the body, it is certain that he understands the article of

faith as we do, and holds that men are not in the church unless they in some sense belong to its body.

But Bellarmine continues,—"The author of the book *De Ecclesiasticis Dogmatibus* replies, that they are not saved. But this appears too severe. Certain it is that St. Ambrose, in his oration on the death of Valentinian, expressly affirms that catechumens can be saved, of which number was Valentinian when he departed this life. Another solution is therefore to be sought. Melchior Cano says that catechumens may be saved, because, if not in the church properly called Christian, they are yet in the church which comprehends all the faithful from Abel to the consummation of the world. But this is not satisfactory; for, since the coming of Christ, there is no true church but that which is properly called Christian, and therefore, if catechumens are not members of this, they are members of none. I reply, therefore, that the assertion, out of the church no one can be saved, is to be understood of those who are of the church neither actually nor in desire, as theologians generally say when treating of baptism." *

"I have said," says Billuart, "that catechumens are not *actually and properly* in the church, because, when they request admission into the church, and when they already have faith and charity, they may be said to be in the church proximately and in desire, as one may be said to be in the house because he is in the vestibule for the purpose of immediately entering. And in this sense must be taken what I have elsewhere said of their pertaining to the church, that is, that they pertain to her inchoately, as aspirants who voluntarily subject themselves to her laws; and they may be saved, notwithstanding there is no salvation out of the church; for this is to be understood of one who is in the church neither actually nor virtually,—*nec re, nec in voto.* In the same sense St. Augustine, *Tract.* 4 *in Joan.* n. 13, is to be understood, when he says,—"*Futuri erant aliqui in Ecclesia excelsioris gratiæ catechumeni,*"—that is, in will and proximate disposition,—"*in voto et proxima dispositione.*" †

It is evident, both from Bellarmine and Billuart, that no one can be saved unless he belongs to the visible communion of the church, either actually or virtually, and also that the

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* *Ubi supra,* cap. 3.

† *Theologia, de Reg. Fid. Dissert.* 3, Art. 2. Sect. 3.

salvation of catechumens can be asserted only because they do so belong; that is, because they are in the vestibule, for the purpose of entering,—have already entered in their will and proximate disposition. St. Thomas teaches with regard to these, in case they have faith working by love, that all they lack is the reception of the visible sacrament *in re;* but if they are prevented by death from receiving it *in re* before the church is ready to administer it, that God supplies the defect, accepts the will for the deed, and reputes them to be baptized. If the defect is supplied, and God reputes them to be baptized, they are so in effect, have in effect received the visible sacrament, are truly members of the external communion of the church, and therefore are saved in it, not out of it.*

Bellarmine, Billuart, Perrone, &c., in speaking of persons as belonging to the soul and not to the body, mean, it is evident, not persons who in no sense belong to the body, but simply those who, though they in effect belong to it, do not belong to it in the full and strict sense of the word, because they have not received the visible sacrament *in re.* All they teach is simply that persons may be saved who have not received the visible sacrament *in re;* but they by no means teach that persons can be saved without having received the visible sacrament at all. There is no difference between their view and ours, for we have never contended for any thing more than this; only we think, that, in these times especially, when the tendency is to depreciate the external, it is more proper to speak of them as belonging in effect to the body, as they certainly do, than it is to speak of them simply as belonging to the soul; for the fact the most important to be insisted on is, not that it is possible to be saved without receiving the visible sacrament *in re,* but that it is impossible to be saved without receiving the visible sacrament at least *in voto et proxima dispositione.*

The case of catechumens disposes of all who are substantially in the same category. The only persons, not catechumens, who can be in the same category, are persons who have been validly baptized, and who stand in the same relation to the sacrament of reconciliation that catechumens do to the sacrament of faith. Infants, validly baptized, by whomsoever baptized, are made members of the body of our Lord, and, if dying before coming to the age of reason, go

* *Summa,* 3, Q. 68, a. 2. corp. ad 2. et ad 3.

immediately to heaven. But persons having come to the age of reason, baptized in an heretical society, or persons baptized in such society in infancy, and adhering to it after having come to years of understanding,—for there can be no difference between the two classes,—whether through ignorance or not, are, as we have seen, out of unity, and therefore out of charity, without which they are nothing. Their faith, if they have any, does not avail them; their sacraments are sacrilegious. The wound of sacrilege is mortal, and the only possible way of being healed is through the sacrament of reconciliation or penance. But for these to stand in the same relation to this sacrament that catechumens do to the sacrament of faith, they must cease to adhere to their heretical societies, must come out from among them, seek and find the church, recognize her as the church, believe what she teaches, voluntarily subject themselves to her laws, knock at the door, will to enter, stand waiting to enter as soon as she opens and says, Come in. If they do all this, they are substantially in the same category with catechumens; and if prevented by death from receiving the visible sacrament *in re*, they may be saved, yet not as simply joined to the soul of the church, but as in effect joined or restored to her external communion. By their voluntary renunciation of their heretical or schismatic society, by their explicit recognition of the church, by their actual return to her door, by their disposition and will to enter, they are effectually, if not in form, members of the body as well as of the soul. Persons excommunicated stand on the same footing as these. They are excluded from the church, unless they repent. If they repent and receive the visible sacrament of reconciliation *vel re*, *vel voto*, they may be saved, because the church in excommunicating them has willed their amendment, not their exclusion from the people of God; but we have no authority to affirm their salvation on any other conditions.

The apparent exception alleged turns out, therefore, to be no real exception at all; for the persons excepted are still members of the body of the church in effect, as the authorities referred to labor to prove. They are persons who have renounced their infidel and heretical societies, and have found and explicitly recognized the church. Their approach to the church is explicit, not constructive, to be inferred only from a certain vague and indefinite longing for truth and unity in general, predicable in fact, we should suppose, of nearly all men; for no man ever clings to falsehood and division,

believing them to be such. Their desire for truth and unity is explicit. Their faith is the Catholic faith; the unity they will is Catholic unity; the church at whose door they knock is the Catholic Church; the sacrament they solicit, they solicit from the hands of her legitimate priest. They are in effect Catholics, and though not *re et proprie* in the church, nobody ever dreams of so understanding the article, out of the church no one can be saved, as to exclude them from salvation. These being in effect members of the external communion, the distinction between the soul and the body of the church does not at all affect the assumption of the Brothers Walenburch, "out of external communion with the true church of Jesus Christ there is no salvation."

The church is always and everywhere, at once and indissolubly, as the living church, interior and exterior, consisting, like man himself, of soul and body. She is not a disembodied spirit, nor a corpse. The separation of the soul and body of the church is as much her death, as the separation of the soul and body of man is his. She is the church, the living church, only by the mutual commerce of soul and body. There may be grave sinners in her body who have no communion with her soul; these are indeed members, but not living members,—and are *in* the body rather than *of* it, as vicious humors may be in the blood without being of it, for they must have communion with the soul in order to be living members; and some theologians maintain that they who are in the body of the church, without pertaining to the soul, at least by faith, though a dead faith, are not, strictly speaking, members at all. On the other hand, if, as all our theologians teach, and Moehler and Perrone especially, the life of the church is in the mutual commerce of the exterior and the interior, the body and the soul, no individual not joined to her body can live her life. Indeed, to suppose that communion with the body alone will suffice, is to fall into mere formalism, to mistake the corpse for the living man; and, on the other hand, to suppose that communion with the soul out of the body and independent of it is practicable is to fall into pure spiritualism, simple Quakerism, which tapers off into transcendentalism or mere sentimentalism, a doctrine which Father Perrone expressly controverts. Either extreme is the death of the church, which is, as we have said, to be regarded as always, at once and indissolubly, soul and body.* To assume that real or virtual

* *Vide* Perrone, *de Loc. Theol.* p. 1, cap. 2, art. 3, et cap. 4, art. 1, ad 1.

communion with the body is not necessary, or that we may be joined to the spirit without being joined to the body is to make the body only occasionally or accidentally necessary to salvation; and, in fact, some modern speculations imply, perhaps expressly teach, that it is necessary only in the case of those who recognize it to be necessary, as if its necessity depended on the state of the human intellect, and not on the appointment of God, or as if a man's disbelief could excuse or make up for his want of faith,—a doctrine not to be extracted from the Holy Scriptures, taught by no father or mediæval doctor, and from which we should suppose every Catholic would instinctively turn with loathing and disgust. The church is the living Temple of God, into which believers must be builded as so many living stones. It is his body, and its body is no more to be dispensed with than its soul; otherwise we could not call her always visible, for to some she would be visible, to others only invisible, and then there would be no visible *catholic* church.

There is no name given under heaven among men but the name of Jesus Christ by which we can be saved. There is salvation in none other; and what Catholic needs to be told that Christ, as the Saviour, is in the church, which is his body, and that it is in the church, and nowhere else, that he does or will save? True, though in the church, he is also out of her, by his grace operating on the hearts of those not yet within; but he operates *ad ecclesiam*, to bring them within, that he may save them there, not that he may save them without. He loves his church; she is his chosen, his beloved, his spouse, and he gave his life for her. In her, so to speak, centre all his affections, his graces, and his providences; and all creatures and events are ordered in reference to her. Without her all history is inexplicable, a fable, and the universe itself meaningless and without a purpose. The salvation of souls itself is in order to her, and God will have no children who are not also hers. As there is but one Father, so can there be but one Mother, and none are of the Father who are not of the Mother. Clear and explicit are all the fathers and saints as to this, and they plainly teach that it would dishonor her, and make God an adulterer, to suppose the salvation of a single soul of which she is not the spiritual mother.

God, in establishing the church from the foundation of the world, in giving his life on the cross for her, in abiding always with her, in her tabernacles, unto the consummation

of the world, in adorning her as a bride with all the graces of the Holy Spirit, in denominating her his beloved, his spouse, has taught us how he regards her, how deep and tender, how infinite and inexhaustible, his love for her, and with what love and honor we should behold her. He loves us with an infinite love, and has died to redeem us; but he loves us and wills our salvation, only in and through his church. He would bring us to himself, and he never ceases as a lover to woo our love; but he wills us to love, and reverence, and adore him only as children of his beloved. Our love and reverence must redound to his glory as her Spouse, and gladen her maternal heart, and swell her maternal joy, or he wills them not, knows them not. O, it is frightful to forget the place the church holds in the love and providence of God, and to regard the relation in which we stand to her as a matter of no moment! She is the one grand object on which are fixed all heaven, all earth, ay, and all hell. Behold her impersonation in the Blessed Virgin, the Holy Mother of God, the glorious Queen of heaven. Humble and obscure she lived, poor and silent, yet all heaven turned their eyes towards her; all hell trembled before her; all earth needed her. Dear was she to all the hosts of heaven; for in her they beheld the Queen, the Mother of grace, the Mother of mercies, the channel through which all love, and mercies, and graces, and good things were to flow to man, and return to the glory and honor of their Father. Humblest of mortal maidens, lowliest on earth, under God, she was highest in heaven. So is the church, our sweet mother. O, she is no creation of the imagination! O, she is no mere accident in human history, in divine providence, divine grace, in the conversion of souls! She is a glorious, a living reality, living the divine, the eternal life of God. Her Maker is her Husband, and he places her, after him, over all in heaven, on the earth, and under the earth. All that he can do to adorn and exalt her he has done. All he can give he gives; for he gives himself, and unites her in indissoluble union with himself. Infinite love, infinite wisdom, infinite power, can do no more. All hail to thee, dear and ever-blessed Mother, thou chosen one, thou well-beloved, thou Bride adorned, thou chaste, immaculate Spouse, thou universal Queen! All hail to thee! We honor thee, for God honors thee; we love thee, for God loves thee; we obey thee, for thou ever commandest the will of thy Lord. The passers-by may jeer thee; the servants of the prince of this world

may call thee black; the daughters of the uncircumcised may beat thee, earth and hell rise up in wrath against thee, and seek to despoil thee of thy rich ornaments and to sully thy fair name; but all the more dear art thou to our hearts; all the more deep and sincere the homage we pay thee; and all the more earnestly do we pray thee to receive our humble offerings, and to own us for thy children, and watch over us that we never forfeit the right to call thee our Mother.

Did we reflect on what the church is, did we consider her rank in the universe, her relation to God, the place she holds, so to speak, in his affections, the bare thought of the salvation of a single soul not spiritually begotten of her would make us thrill with horror. It would give the lie to all God's providences, and subvert the whole economy of his grace. We need not start at this. All may have the church for their mother, if they choose. Christ is in the church, but he is also out of the church. In the church he is operating by his grace to save those who enter; out of her he operates also by his grace, or is ready to operate, in the hearts of all men, to supply the will and the ability to come in. Do not imagine that God has only half done his work, that he has merely prepared his church, fitted her up as a palace, filled her with all good things, all things necessary for our salvation, when once we have entered, but that he has left us without the ability to find her out, or, having found her out, without ability to enter. He leaves nothing undone. No man has the natural ability to come into the church, any more than he has the natural ability to save himself after he has come in. All before and all after is the work of God. We can do nothing of ourselves alone, —make not even the first motion without his grace inciting and assisting us. Of no use would have been his church,— it would have been a mere mockery, or a splendid failure, —if he had not provided for our entrance as well as for our salvation afterwards.

But he *has* provided for our entrance. He gives sufficient grace to all men. The grace of prayer, *gratia orationis*, is given freely, gratuitously, unto every one. All receive the ability to ask; all, then, can ask, and if they do ask, as sure as God cannot lie they shall receive the grace to seek; and if they seek, the same divine veracity is pledged that they shall find; and if they find, they may knock; and if they knock, it shall be opened to them. God has said it.

Christ is in the church; he is out of it. In it and out of it he is one and the same, and operates ever *ad unitatem*. He is out of the church to draw all men into the church; all have, then, if they will, the assistance of the infinite God to come in, and if they do not come in, it is their own fault. God withholds nothing necessary. He gives to all, by his grace, every thing requisite, and in superabundance. If we come not at his call, on our own heads lies the blame. We have no excuse, not the least shadow of an excuse. The reason why we come not can be only that we do not choose to come, that we resist his grace, and scorn his invitations, and will not yield to his inspirations. No nice theological distinctions, no scholastic subtilty, no latitudinarian ingenuity, can relieve us of the blame, or make it not true that we could have come, had we been so disposed. If, then, we stay away, and are lost, it is we who have destroyed ourselves.

Here are the great mass of our countrymen aliens from the church of God. Why do they not come and ask to be received as children and heirs? Is it lack of opportunity? It is false. There is no lack of opportunity. God does not deny them, not one of them, the needed grace. The church is here; through her noble and faithful pastors, her voice sounds out from Maine to Florida, from the Atlantic to the Pacific. How can they hear without a preacher? But they have heard. Verily the voice of the preacher is gone out into all the earth. They have no need to say, Who shall ascend into heaven to bring Christ down? or, Who shall descend into hell to bring Christ up from the dead? The word is nigh them. It sounds in every ear; it speaks in every heart. We all know they might come, if they would. From all sections, and from all ranks and conditions, some have come, and by coming proved that it is possible for all to come; and in so proving rendered invalid the plea of ignorance or inability. Those who have not come can as well come as those who have come; and their guilt in not coming is aggravated by their knowledge of the fact that some of their own number have come; for they are no longer in ignorance.* The fault is their own. They stay away because they do not will to come. "Ye will not come to me that ye may have life, because your deeds are evil."

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* S. Aug. lib. 1, *de Bapt. contr. Donat.* cap. 5.—S. Joan. Chrysost. in *Epist. ad Rom.* xxvi.

They disregard divine grace, they disdain the church, they contemn her pastors, they scorn her sacraments. For what Catholic can doubt, if they were to seek the truth, *cauta solicitudine*, as St. Augustine says they must, even to excuse them from formal heresy or infidelity, that they would find, and, finding and knocking, that they would be admitted?

No; let us love our countrymen too much to be ingenious in inventing excuses for them, to strain the faith in their behalf till it is nearly ready to snap. Let us from a deep and tender charity, which, when need is, has the nerve to be terribly severe, thunder, or, if we are no Boanerges, breathe in soft but thrilling accents, in their ears, in their souls, in their consciences, those awful truths which they will know too late at the day of judgment. We must labor to convict them of sin, to show them their folly and madness, to convince them that they are dead in trespasses and sins, and condemned already, and that they can be restored to life, and freed from condemnation, only by the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, whom we, and we only, preach, which is dispensed through the church, and the church only.

It has been said that our countrymen are not to be driven into the church, and that a soft answer turneth away wrath. All very true, — who doubts it? Use as soft words and speak in as honeyed tones as you please, but do not forget to set forth sound doctrine, or to use hard arguments. Tell the truth in your own way, and by all means in a manner as little offensive as possible; but TELL IT. Nobody has any wish or intention to drive people into the church. There are some things so obvious, that men of ordinary sense may be presumed not to overlook them. The only driving we wish is the driving by the force of truth distinctly enunciated, by solid arguments clearly stated, and solemn appeals well put. So far as this may be called driving, which is only presenting motives to reason and free-will, we are for driving, and will do all we can to drive, till every one is driven within the fold. The lord of the nuptial feast did not command his servants to go out into the highways and hedges and *coax* people to come in, but to *compel* them to come in, that his house might be full. No man can honestly mistake the drift of our remarks, or imagine that they proceed from harshness of temper, or want of respect for the rights or the characters of those without, as well as

of those within. What we urge and insist upon is, that we feel, and freely, earnestly, solemnly, without fear or palliation, set forth to our unbelieving and heretical countrymen, the danger, the sinfulness, of their present condition; that, in so far as we wish or seek their conversion, we must follow the example of the apostles and fathers, and reason of sin, justice, and judgment to come; that we must present the question of the church, not as an intellectual or æsthetical question, but as a question of life and death, of heaven and hell. Infidelity and heresy have not improved by age, and they are as hateful to God, as odious to the saints, as destructive to the souls of men, here and now, as they were in the days of St. Athanasius, St. Hilary, St. Jerome, or St. Augustine, and are to be met and conquered only in the spirit and by the weapons with which these holy fathers and great saints met and conquered them.

If any Catholics imagine, that, in some things we have said, their favorite policy has been arraigned, they will take care not to misinterpret us. We have spoken strongly, earnestly, as we have the right to speak, as it was our duty to speak; but we hope we have not spoken arrogantly, harshly, uncharitably, or without authority. We have impeached no one's motives, faith, zeal, or piety. We trust we are not so utterly destitute of Christian humility as to imagine that we have any special monopoly of true Catholic faith and zeal, or as not to feel that they who prefer a policy we may disapprove may be at least as true believers, as deeply in earnest, as solicitous for the salvation of souls, as ourselves. God forbid that we should think of drawing a parallel, or presume in the remotest degree conceivable to breathe a censure against them! We are not insensible to the pious worth, nor destitute of admiration of the labors, of those who have worn out their lives in laboring to plant the church in this moral wilderness. We are not untouched by the recital of their labors, their privations, their sufferings, their sacrifices, and we would that we could aspire to their virtues. We offer our prayer at the tombs of those who have been called to their reward; we love and reverence those still living. Who are we, to judge them? We speak not of the policy they may have adopted in its relation to their times, and the frightful circumstances under which they unfurled here the banner of the cross. We speak only in relation to the country as it now is. Times have changed. Protestantism is not, as to its forms, what

it was even twenty years ago. We have as bitter enemies as ever, but not in the same shape. The bigot gives place to the latitudinarian. We have not now to prove that the church may be as good as the sects, or even better than the sects; for these two points are now virtually conceded us. We have now to prove that she alone is Christianity, and that without Christianity, without Christ, there is no true life here or hereafter. It is this great fact, so solemn and so terrible, that we have wished to place prominently before our readers,—not to censure the past, but to guide our future efforts, and for the purpose of rendering such service as may be in our power to the great and glorious cause equally dear to all Catholics.

EXTRA ECCLESIAM NULLA SALUS.

[From Brownson's Quarterly Review for April, 1874.]

Our Holy Father Pius IX., gloriously reigning, though despoiled by liberal Catholics and a prisoner in the Vatican, has told France and other countries that their calamities are due to so-called liberal Catholics. We are not wholly free from their influence in this country, either in politics, or in theology. We have Catholics, or men that call themselves Catholics, who, without knowing it, defend in politics, pure secularism, only another name for political atheism, and—not always the same individuals indeed—who defend in theology what, to our understanding, is a most destructive latitudinarianism. It is seldom we meet a Catholic, man or woman, priest or layman, who will permit us to say that "out of the church no one can be saved," without requiring us to qualify the assertion, or so to explain it as to make it meaningless to plain people who are ignorant of the subtilties, nice distinctions, and refinements of theologians.

How many of our Catholics, though holding Protestantism to be an error against faith and antagonistic to the church, hold that the mass of Protestants are out of the way of salvation, and can never see God in the beatific vision, unless before they die they become Catholics, united to Christ in

the church, which is his body? If we assert the contrary, are we not met with theological distinctions, logical refinements, subtile explanations and qualifications, which place us altogether in the wrong? We are told, and told truly, that all validly baptized infants, by whomsoever baptized, dying in infancy or before arriving at the use of reason, are saved, enter the kingdom of heaven; next, we are told, not so truly, that all persons remaining in false or heretical sects, not knowing that they are false or heretical and invincibly ignorant of the true church, may be saved; and finally, that those who are prevented from seeking for and accepting the true church by the bitter prejudices against her, instilled into their minds by parents and teachers, are to be reputed invincibly ignorant.

The church teaches, as we have learned her doctrine, that the infant validly baptized, by whomsoever the baptism is administered, receives in the sacrament the infused habit of faith and sanctity, and that this habit (*habitus*) suffices for salvation till the child comes to the use of reason; hence all baptized infants dying in infancy are saved. But when arrived at the use of reason, the child needs something beyond this infused habit, and is bound to elicit the act of faith. The habit is not actual faith, and is only a supernatural facility, infused by grace, of eliciting the actual virtue of faith. The habit of sanctity is lost by mortal sin, but the habit of faith, we are told, can be lost only by a positive act of infidelity. This is not strictly true; for the habit may be lost by the omission to elicit the act of faith, which neither is nor can be elicited out of the Catholic Church; for out of her the credible object, which is *Deus revelans et ecclesia proponens*, is wanting. Consequently, outside of the church there can be no salvation for any one, even though baptized, who has come to the use of reason. The habit given in baptism, then, ceases to suffice, and the obligation to elicit the act begins.

We may be told that it may not be through one's own fault that he omits to elicit the act, especially when born and brought up in a community hostile or alien to the church. Who denies it? But from that it does not follow either that the habit is not lost by the omission, or that the elicitation of the act is not necessary, in the case of every adult, to salvation. Invincible ignorance excuses from sin, we admit, in that whereof one is invincibly ignorant, but it confers no virtue, and is purely negative. It excuses

from sin, if you will, the omission to elicit the act, but it cannot supply the defect caused by the omission. Something more than to be excused from the sin of infidelity is necessary to salvation.

To us there is something shocking in the supposition that the dogma, *Extra ecclesiam nulla salus*, is only *generally* true, and therefore not a catholic dogma. All Catholic dogmas, if catholic, are not only generally, but universally true, and admit no exception or restriction whatever. If men can come to Christ and be saved without the church or union with Christ in the church, she is not Catholic, and it is false to call her the one holy Catholic Church, as in the creed. The latitudinarianism which explains away the dogma of exclusive salvation, and which is so widely prevalent, is a denial, in principle, of the Catholicity of the church, and of the faith she holds and teaches, and seems to us to grow out of forgetfulness of the relation of the church to the Incarnation, her office in the economy of salvation, the teleological character of the Christian order, the religion of the end, and the disposition of the modern world to mistake liberality for charity. The church grows, so to speak, out of the Incarnation, of which she is, as Moehler well says in his *Symbolik*, in some sort, the visible continuation on earth, and from which she is inseparable. St. Paul calls the church "the body of Christ." She lives in Christ, and he in her; his life is her life, and individuals are joined to him and live his life by being joined to her and living his life in her. To be separated from her is to be separated from him, is to be separated from the incarnate Word himself, the one Mediator of God and men, and from our end, as well as the medium of its attainment.

As we understand the teachings of our holy religion, it is teleological, is final, shows the way and supplies the means by which men are saved from sin, and return to God as their final cause. Existences proceed, by way of creation—not emanation, generation, or evolution—from God as first cause, and, in order to attain their end or perfection, must return to him, in the palingenesia, without absorption in him, to God as their final cause. In this return, on which we enter by regeneration or the new birth in Christ, is our salvation, the complement, the fulfilment, or the perfection of our existence, and consequently our supreme beatitude. The procession of existences from God, and their return to him as their beatitude, constitute two orders, or rather two parts of

the one divine plan, which is a complete and dialectic whole. The first part is initial, or the order of natural generation; the second is teleological, the order of regeneration, or palingenesia, as St. Paul calls it, after our Lord himself. These two parts are termed in Holy Scripture, natural and spiritual, and are usually called natural and supernatural by modern theologians. Of mankind, in the initial order, Adam is the progenitor, and all men descend from him by natural generation, and hence the unity of the human race; of mankind, in the second or teleological order, Christ the incarnate God, or the Word made flesh, is the progenitor; hence, as St. Peter says, his is "the only name given under heaven among men, whereby we must be saved." He is the father of regenerated humanity, or humanity in the palingenesiac order, as Adam is of generated humanity, or of men in the natural or initial order, and is, therefore, called by St. Paul the second Adam, the Lord from heaven.

One thing is certain, namely, that no one can be saved, enter into the kingdom of God, or attain to beatitude, without being regenerated or born again of the incarnate Word, or if not united to regenerated humanity in Christ. One can no more be a Christian without being born of Christ, begotten anew by the Holy Ghost in Christ Jesus, than one can be a man without being born of Adam by way of natural generation. Without the Incarnation or union with it, there is never any salvation, for without it there is no regenerated humanity, no teleological order, no fulfilment of man's existence. But the church grows out of the Incarnation, and is inseparable from it. Under one aspect, she is herself regenerated humanity, or the human race propagated by the election of grace, as humanity in the initial order is propagated or explicated by natural generation. Without being united to regenerated humanity, men remain forever in the initial order, below their destiny, inchoate existences, with their nature unfilled, devoured alike by an everlasting want which cannot be supplied, and an everlasting self-reproach for having by their own fault neglected the means of salvation once within their reach. Hence the never-ending sufferings of those who die unregenerate. Even infants dying unbaptized, that is, in the initial order, unregenerate, the holy Council of Florence defines, go to hell—*in infernos;* though they will not suffer for any actual sins of commission or omission, of which they were incapable. Some tender-hearted theologians think they will not suffer at all,

but no rational creature can remain forever below his destiny, with the purpose of his being unfilled, without experiencing a want, and therefore not without a greater or less degree of suffering.

Under one aspect, the church consists of the regenerated race, as we have said, of all who have by the election of grace been born again, begotten anew by the Holy Ghost in Christ Jesus. Out of the church, in this sense, no one can pretend that there is any salvation. But the church, under another aspect, is the body of Christ, and is the medium through which the Incarnation reaches and practically instructs, regenerates, elevates, sustains, guides and directs the soul in the palingenesiac order, or in reference to the end for which man is created and exists. In a word, the church is the medium by which the soul is elevated above the natural order, introduced into the teleological order, united to Christ, and therefore to God, its final cause. Without the church, in this sense, the Incarnation, it seems to us, would be to the soul, to mankind, as if it were not. There would be no dialectic reason for it in the Creator's plan. Indeed, in all Protestant sects, the Incarnation is either denied outright, or serves no purpose. The Word could not have died to redeem us, or to make satisfaction for us, if he had not assumed human nature to be as really and as truly his nature as is the divine nature itself; for God could not die in his divine nature, since in the divine nature he is immortal. He could die only in his human nature, hypostatically united to the divine person of the Word. But even as incarnate, he could make satisfaction *for us* only as our head, and therefore, *in actu*, only for those who are actually his members, or who become so by regeneration. He is potentially the head of every man, and therefore is said to have died for all men, but he is actually the head only of those who are joined to him as his members. The atonement is sufficient for all, but to receive its benefits, it must be applied, and it is applied, only to those who are born of him; for they only participate in it through their head as members. Those who are separated from him do not suffer in his sufferings, or satisfy in his satisfaction; for they are not members of which he is the head, and his merits neither are nor can be theirs while they are separated from him, or until they are joined to him by the new birth, and made one with him. They have no connection with him as their head; he is not their progenitor—has not be-

gotten them; and they are simply natural men, children of Adam, in the order of generation, initial or inchoate existences, infinitely below the plane of their destiny.

If, as every Catholic must hold, or deny all office or significance to the church in the economy of salvation, the church is the medium by which men come to Christ, and by the Holy Ghost, who dwells and operates in her, are united to Christ as their head, and participate, through the union of the head and the members, in his sufferings, his work of atonement, and his merits, as living members participate in whatever is suffered or done by their living head, how then can we conceive the possibility of salvation out of the church? To admit it would deny her catholicity; would, it seems to us, deny the living connection of the church with the Incarnation, and in fact the Incarnation itself, and the whole teleological or palingenesiac order which it founds, or the God-Man creates. We do not pretend that the doctrines of the church are demonstrable by natural reason from principles evident by the light of nature, for they are known only by divine or supernatural revelation, and are held only by faith; but we do contend that the Creator's works are strictly dialectic; that his plan or design in creation and redemption, though known only as revealed, is logically coherent in all its parts, and that the several parts are mutually related as parts of one complete and uniform whole. To admit salvation to be possible to any not joined to Christ in his body, the church, breaks, as it seems to us, the logic or dialectic consistency of the divine plan or design as revealed to us in the written and unwritten word of God, and reduces Catholicity to the level of the sects, all of which are founded on compromise, and are incoherent, made up of heterogeneous elements, like the feet of the image in Nabuchodonosor's dream. Hence the theologians, who by their explanations open wide the door of salvation, labor with all their might to prove that those who apparently die outside of the church, and whose salvation, they tell us, is not to be despaired of, do not really die out of her communion, but, in fact, in it, and as Catholics. That is, men may be in the communion of the church while apparently out of it, and adhering to sects hostile to it, being excused through invincible ignorance.

Yet, if there is any truth in what we have said of the teleological character of the Christian order, and that it is and can be entered only by the new birth, or "new creation,"

as St. Paul calls it, this invincible ignorance, even if really invincible, which it rarely is, though it excuses from the sin of heresy or infidelity, does not of itself leave the soul in a salvable state, for it confers no positive virtue, elevates not the soul to the teleological or supernatural order, nor places it on the plane of its destiny. Else, why are not unbaptized infants dying in infancy saved? Why can they never see God in the beatific vision? They are incapable of actual sin, and are assuredly invincibly ignorant. The reason is that the teleological or supernatural order, though it presupposes the initial or natural order, is not developed or evolved from it. We are not placed by our birth from Adam on the plane of our beatitude, but to reach it must be born again, created anew in Christ Jesus; a new and a higher life must be begotten in us, the life which flows out from the Incarnation, a life of which the Word made flesh is the author and fountain. Salvation, or what is the same thing, heaven, beatitude, is not reached by any possible natural progress, for it does not lie in the plane of nature, or the natural order, that is, the order of generation, as the rationalists pretend. They recognize no teleological order, no end or final cause of man's existence, and their heaven is no higher than the Christian's hell.

Now it is clear that one may be excused from the sin of infidelity, or the guilt of heresy, and yet not be in the way of salvation, for he may lack the positive supernatural virtues which place him on the plane of his supernatural end or beatitude, and which can neither be acquired nor lived without faith. What we wish to impress upon the mind of the reader is, that the simple negation of sin does not suffice for heaven. We do not say that, if man had not sinned, God would have become incarnate, but we do say that man cannot attain to his end without being not only discharged from guilt, but reconstituted in the supernatural justice in which Adam was originally constituted. The two, the discharge from guilt and the restoration to justice, are, *in hac providentia*, coincident and inseparable, if we speak of original sin, and the one is never without the other; yet are they distinguishable, and the former does not suffice for glorification in heaven. For that, the adult must be raised to and live a supernatural life.

In the case of poorly instructed or misinstructed Catholics, yet really in the visible communion of the church, who involuntarily err even in regard to very important matters,

but are docile and willing to be set right, we not only regard them as inculpable, but as in the way of salvation; for they have or may have the positive supernatural virtues required. The seed is in them. But we are unable to extend the same rule to persons in communions, or sects rather, notoriously separated from the church, and under anathema. To them the principle of invincible ignorance, it seems to us, does not apply, any more than it does to open and avowed infidels, pantheists, or atheists. These have not the seed in them, and if they die as they are, must go *in infernos*, however invincibly ignorant. If they received the seed in baptism, it has been lost, as we have seen, by their omission, or even inability, to elicit the act of faith, on coming to the use of reason. The seed is choked and prevented from germinating, or the fowls of the air—evil spirits—gather it up as soon as sown. The invincibly ignorant may not be doomed to so severe a punishment as the vincibly ignorant, but ignorance itself is always either a sin or the penalty of sin, and is, as St. Augustine says, "just cause of damnation."

With regard to the several Protestant sects in whose good faith we know them too well to believe, we do not judge individuals, for judgment has not been committed to us; and we dare not say when a Protestant dies that he is assuredly lost, for we know not what passed between God and his soul at the last moment when the breath left the body; but this we do dare say, that, if one dies a Protestant, and the presumption, if he remains an adhering Protestant up to the last moment, is that he does so die, he is most assuredly damned, that is, forever deprived of heaven, and will never see God as he is. Protestantism is an open and avowed revolt against the church of God, a total rejection, in principle, of Christ and his authority, therefore, of Christianity itself, and Protestants exhibit in their lives no virtues of a supernatural order, or that transcend our natural light and strength. If, in infancy, they have been elevated above the natural order, they have fallen back to its level, and not seldom below it. If they can be saved in their heresy, or apostasy, the divine plan, as we have learned it, is false and delusive.

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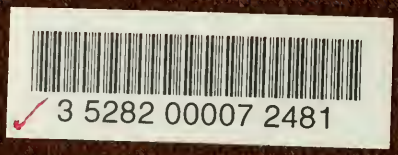
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